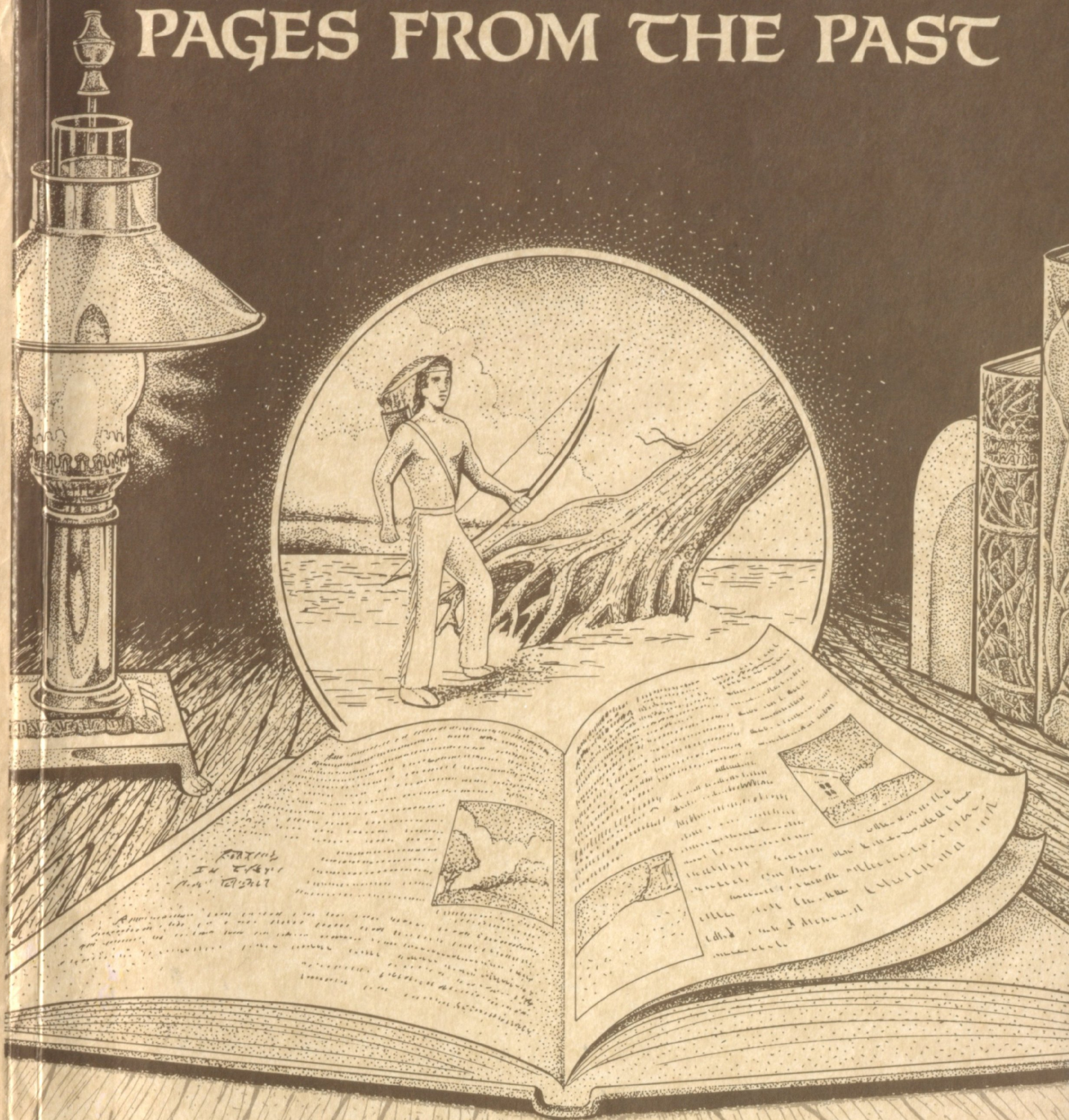


PAGES FROM THE PAST



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The Hammond Historical Society

1991

PAGES FROM THE PAST

Perspectives of the Calumet Region:
Selections from the minutes and newsletters
of the Hammond Historical Society, 1960-1980.

Compiled by Edward B. Hayward

Edited by Antoinette Caldwell

Hammond Historical Society
564 State Street
Hammond, Indiana
1991

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Dedication	5
History of Project	7
Minutes of the First Annual Meeting, by Margerie Sohl	9
First Annual Meeting, President's Report, by John Wilhelm	12
Great Hammond Personalities of the 1910's and 1920's, by Marjorie Sohl	13
The Day Frank Brought It Home, by Warren A. Reeder	15
Further Notes on Frank Betz, by Arthur Weis	19
History of Artim's Trucking, by Marjorie Sohl	21
History of the Minas Store, by Marjorie Sohl	23
John Scherer, by Warren A. Reeder	25
Old Central School, by Warren A. Reeder	27
St. Margaret Hospital, by Warren A. Reeder	29
Old Conkey Plant, by Warren A. Reeder	33
"A Book Report is not a Book Review," by Warren A. Reeder	37
Farewell, by Warren A. Reeder	41
State Street, by Charles Delaney	45
Lester Ottenheimer, by Warren A. Reeder	47
Taylor Chain Company, by Warren A. Reeder	49
Early Automobile Dealers in Hammond, by Warren A. Reeder	51
Joe Hirsch, by Warren A. Reeder	53
Liberty Hall, by Warren A. Reeder	55
Ancient Hammond: The Indian Burying Ground, by Charles B. Delaney	59
Rimbach Avenue, by Warren A. Reeder	61
Verlyn Mack, by Warren A. Reeder	65
Captain Watts, by Ellen Mattwig	66

Vernon Anderson,	
by Warren A. Reeder	69
Caldwell and Drake,	
by Warren A. Reeder	73
Pete Smidt,	
by F. Derril Reed	77
Warren A. Reeder,	
by E. B. Hayward	81
Warren A. Reeder, Jr.,	
by F. Derril Reed	83
The Day Pete Austgen Came to Visit,	
by F. Derril Reed	85
March of the Indians,	
by F. Derril Reed	87
Full Circle,	
by Walter J. Sommers	89
Neighborhood,	
by Edward B. Hayward	93
Remembrances of the Library of the '20s and '30s,	
by Edward B. Hayward	97
Svoboda's Nickleodeon,	
by F. Derril Reed	101
Boy Scout Troops of Hammond,	
by John Phillips	103
The Duchy of Glendale Park,	
by Jerome F. Kutak	105
William C. Belman,	
by Edward B. Hayward	113
My Most Unforgettable Student,	
by Ruth Ewing	117
Making Brick in Munster,	
by Walter J. Sommers	119
Reminiscences,	
by Maurey Zlotnik	123
Memories of Hammond around 1900,	
by Maria Hesterman	127
Snowballs in the Book Drop, or	
Some Funny Things Happened to me at the Library,	
by Edward B. Hayward	131
Reminiscences of Hammond in the 1920s,	
by Maurice O'Hern	141
Edward B. Hayward, 1916-1983,	
by Marjorie Sohl	163
In Memoriam--John F. Wilhelm,	
by Roger Reeder	165
In Memoriam--Bert A. Hindmarch,	
by Robert O. Kindle	169
Hammond Historical Society Officers and Directors, 1990 .	172
Index	174

DEDICATION

It is a pleasure and an honor to be asked to write a few introductory remarks to this collection of works selected by three local individuals, to be included in this volume of Minutes and Newsletters, compiled by Ed Hayward, with the assistance of John Wilhelm and Warren Reeder.

While each has received distinction in his particular field, they have in common worked diligently in promoting the work of the Hammond Historical Society. One wonders how they found time to earn a living, with the work they did for the Society. Of course, the answer is that each had the talent to organize his time, and to concentrate his efforts in accomplishing his objective.

That, of course, is the attribute of all successful men, as history records their achievements.

No one can dispute the merits of the chief editor of this work. After a life of study and work he became the Chief Librarian of the Hammond Library, with its new and expanded quarters on State Street, and its numerous branches, until his retirement. That new building was the outgrowth of the tiny Carnegie establishment located on Hohman Avenue, just north of the downtown area. Now, the present building is an ornament, housing an establishment of many allied fields, nurturing the intellectual needs of a large community. It is a worthy monument to the city's needs and accomplishments, as well as to Ed's commanding presence.

But he was not selfish in limiting his time and efforts, either to that job, or one project--not only in raising a family, but in many other time consuming efforts on behalf of the community.

As a fellow Kiwanian, I am able to attest to his contributions to that civic organization. He rose through the ranks to the Presidency and finally was elected as the "Kiwanian of the Year." I never knew him to turn down a request for help, if it was in his time schedule. And that was a busy schedule indeed.

And so it could be said of his co-workers on the instant project. John Wilhelm was a dynamo in every respect. How he found time, as a tax specialist, to organize a bank, namely the Hoosier State Bank, is a

mystery. But he did it in a masterful manner, until it was merged with another bank. Throughout his whole life, he found time, not only to devote to his large family, but to the affairs of Hammond. Just as with Hayward, he was a faithful Kiwanian, and an active worker through his life in so many civic affairs that there is not space to record them.

Warren Reeder also had a list that can well stand beside that of any dedicated civic worker. Not only as the founder of a distinguished real estate company, but in so many activities that he could well be nominated as "Mr. Hammond." His especial forte was history, and many of his works are to be found in the archives of the library with his name on them. One of the established works comes to mind, his notable one on the Hammond episode of the famous railroad wreck. But I would especially like to call attention to the dedication inscribed in the "Hammond, Indiana--American Bicentennial Year Book" of 1976, which gives credit to his work as President of the Chicago Civil War Round Table, his being named in 1961, "Realtor of the Year;" co-founder of the Hoosier State Bank, and other distinctions. I am pleased to cite him as a great man.

Jerome F. Kutak

HISTORY OF PROJECT

This ninth publication of the Hammond Historical Society has had a struggle to come to the point of a finished product. Edward Hayward and Bert Hindmarch worked with the original idea many years. There was the problem of accumulating the funds and we have Evainez Jonas to thank for keeping records of the money and guarding (with staunch help from Bert) against use for any purpose other than another publication. Also, we appreciate the work of Marjorie Sohl in taking the minutes and Kathryn Thegse in keeping the minutes safe in the Calumet Room for which we are indebted to the Hammond Public Library--not only for the space, but also for clerical and office expense help.

There have been several 4th vice presidents (in charge of projects) who have worked on other projects and carried the publication project through various stages. The deaths of Jules Ebert, 4th Vice President, in August 1988, Bert Hindmarch in July 1989, and Evainez Jonas in February 1990, brought a feeling of urgency into the minds of the current officers saying NOW we MUST get on with it.

The passage of time has involved different methods of the preparing the written word. Mrs. Judy Bretz spent many hours typing the pages in the early years and then putting it again into her word processor. The staff at the Thompson Printing Company encouraged us in saying, "you can do it; we will help." Judy's machine talked to their machine and a book was born--Pages from the Past.

Many committees, many former officers, many proof readers should be thanked for their efforts, but we just can't list all of them and would not want to omit anyone. You know who you are. THANK YOU!

It is our hope that this record of the personalities and anecdotes from the past will entertain and educate as Edward Hayward had in mind when he selected the articles. He believed that the people were important and that we should not forget them. Marge Sohl has indexed the articles and pictures to make the publication more useful. The Society urges all to put into safekeeping our knowledge of the past so future readers will have a source for pleasure and study.

The Hammond Historical Society
Officers and Directors of 1990



MINUTES OF THE FIRST ANNUAL MEETING

May 10, 1960

The first annual meeting of the Hammond Historical Society, Inc., was called to order at 7:35 p.m. on Tuesday, May 10, 1960, in Room 224 of the Hammond Technical Vocational High School by the president, Mr. John Wilhelm.

A roll call sheet was passed indicating 30 persons present. The minutes of the last regular meeting, March 1, were read. A correction in the publisher of Dr. Moore's book was made to read the Indiana Historical Bureau instead of Society.

Mr. Wilhelm read his annual report in which he emphasized the meaning of and purpose for organizing the society and the roll which it could play to fill a cultural need of the city. He thanked all the officers and members for their cooperation and interest during the year.

The treasurer, Mrs. Cook, reported \$93.00 had been collected in dues to date. \$30.25 expenses had been incurred in the incorporating of the society, leaving a balance of \$62.75.

Mr. Wamsher, membership chairman, announced that within the next two weeks, membership application forms will be mailed out to all of the 240 persons who signed as incorporators. Dues are \$3.00 per year for individual memberships.

Mr. Wilhelm read from Articles VII and VIII of the by-laws explaining the election of directors and officers at the annual meeting. Mr. Warren Reeder presented the following slate of officers as per the nominating committee's report:

President	-- Warren Reeder
1st Vice President	-- Mrs. Henry Eggers
2nd Vice President	-- Edward B. Hayward
3rd Vice President	-- John W. Wamsher
4th Vice President	--
5th Vice President	--
Secretary	-- Miss Marjorie Sohl
Treasurer	-- Mrs. William Cook

Directors:

For 1 year:

Mr. Harold Hammond
Miss Florence Allman
Mrs. Anna Emery
Mr. Arthur J. Weiss

For 2 years:

Mrs. Vincent Bower
Mr. Anton Tapper
Miss Frances Taylor
Mr. Elmer Rose
Mr. Edward Herkey

For 3 years:

Mrs. Florence Cleveland
Mr. Palmer Singleton, Jr.
Miss Georgia Barnett
Mr. Herman Frischbutter
Mr. Delbert L. Purkey

For 4 years:

The nominating committee did not have nominations for the 4th and 5th Vice Presidents and the 4 year directors, hoping some could be filled by nominations from the floor at the meeting or by the Board during the year to come. Mr. Hayward suggested that Mr. Wilhelm read the duties of the 4th and 5th Vice Presidents. The following nominations were made from the floor:

Mr. Singleton nominated Mrs. Olive S. Beyers for 4th Vice President. She declined because she will be out of town much of the year.

Mr. Hayward nominated Marvin Wheeler as a director. Mrs. Beyers seconded the nomination.

Mrs. Vincent Bower nominated Mrs. Minnie Taitt as a director. She declined.

Mr. Wilhelm nominated Mrs. Mary Peters for 4th Vice President. Mrs. Bower seconded the nomination.

Mr. Hayward nominated George Nelson as a director. Mrs. Beyers seconded the nomination.

Mr. Palmer Singleton moved that nominations be closed. Miss Mary Burhans seconded the motion. The slate of officers nominated by the nominating committee and from the floor were elected. The new officers were introduced. Vacancies to be filled later include the 5th Vice President and 3 directors.

Mr. Wilhelm introduced Warren Reeder who talked on the diary of Carolyn Hohman, the wife of the first settler in Hammond. Walter Mott, a grandson of Carolyn Hohman, gave him a copy of the eight spasmodic entries in the diary from April, 1850 to June, 1870. These brief and occasional entries reflected the youth and loneliness of these early settlers; the arrival of relatives and friends and the birth of children; the buying and selling of land; the arrival of the railroads; the friendships with the Indians; the birth of surrounding towns to the south; the coming of the G. H. Hammond Packing Company; and the growth of the settlement with schools and churches established.

Then Mr. Reeder showed slides which he had taken around town of some of the old homes and buildings which could be identified with Hammond history including the Drackert home, probably the oldest standing home in Hammond; the Huehn Opera House; the Milligan home at Truman and Oakley; the old Minas home, remodeled to the present Kuhn Clinic; Riverside School, the oldest school in Hammond; the Schloer Shoe Store, probably the oldest store in continuous existence; Mueller's Hardware, established a year later; the Calumet National Bank, the largest bank in Hammond; the old Bell Telephone building; Jack Fox's, the first skyscraper in Hammond; the Hoosier Bank Building, the oldest bank building in Hammond; the Tapper Building before it was torn down to make room for the first downtown building to be erected since Goldblatt's was built 33 years ago. Mr. Reeder concluded the slides with the slides of monuments to some of the early families which are found in the Oak Hill Cemetery.

Mr. Wilhelm reminded all present of the assignment to write down their autobiography -- at least where they came from and some of their opinions. He read the first page of his entitled, "This I Remember," which is to be continued at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9 p.m. with the next meeting to be announced for some time next fall.

Respectfully submitted,

MARJORIE SOHL
Secretary



FIRST ANNUAL MEETING -- JOHN WILHELM'S PRESIDENT'S REPORT

May 10, 1960

The year 1959-60 marked a beginning of your Society. Your officers and directors were faced with the difficult decisions of developing your operating structure, maintaining policy and finance. Having great faith in the future of the Society, we have resolved these problems with the knowledge that the Hammond Historical Society will occupy an important place in the years to come.

I think it appropriate to emphasize what we consider to be the role of the Hammond Historical Society. It has been my observation that, as cities grow and prosper, the past takes on new meaning. In all such cities, the historical societies have become more and more important. Just as in the case of other major cities in the United States, our role has begun. We fill a cultural need in the City of Hammond that no other organization can fill. In many respects, we touch areas not touched by any other organizations. We must meet this challenge and to do it we have to have the facilities, organization and backing that is necessary. Success needs success. Your officers and directors are pleased to say to you that we believe we are proceeding in the right direction.

As the public becomes aware of our increased ability, we will grow in membership and strength. Unquestionably, your Society will gain in stature and will be one with which you, as members, will be proud to be associated. We seek and ask your support in all of our activities, and your help in working with us in expanding and increasing these activities.

It has been a pleasure to serve as your first President. I would not be fair unless I expressed my heart-felt thanks for the fine cooperation which all of your officers, members of the board, and all associated with the Society have given me.

JOHN F. WILHELM
President



GREATER HAMMOND PERSONALITIES OF THE 1910'S AND 1920'S

September 27, 1960

During the meeting of the Hammond Historical Society held on September 27, 1960, Mr. Arthur Weiss spoke briefly on each of the following men:

1. John Fitzgerald, Head of the Hammond Distilling Company, who was responsible for Mr. Weiss's coming to Hammond.
2. A. Murray Turner, who had a deep interest in developing the parks of the region, and was chiefly instrumental in developing Wicker Park. He and his associate bought the property from Mrs. Wicker, held it until legislation could be passed allowing a township to own park property, and then sold it to the township at the price they had paid for it. It was then named Wicker Memorial Park, for the family who originally owned the land and as a memorial to the soldiers in order to get President Coolidge to come to dedicate it.
3. George Hannauer, who developed the Hannauer-Wilcox car retarder at the Gibson yards of the I.H.B. Railroad. It was a device for stopping cars in the switching operation operated from the control tower. George Hannauer lived in the area then called West Hammond, now Calumet City, and he did much to improve the moral reputation of West Hammond.
4. Peter Meyn, who was in the grocery business, insurance, real estate and banking business and was instrumental in the locating of many industries in Hammond, including the W.B. Conkey Company and the Standard Steel Car Company.
5. Frank S. Betz, who came to Hammond in the early 1900's, went into the business of surgical

instruments and developed it into the largest manufacturer of hospital supplies in the country. The plant is now occupied by the Queen Anne Candy Company.

6. Ray Seeley, city engineer, who with the help of James T. Bruno and Thomas Stack reworked and gave some system to the whole method of naming and numbering the city streets and houses.



A. Murray Turner



Peter Meyn



Frank S. Betz



THE DAY FRANK BROUGHT IT HOME

May - November, 1963
By Warren A. Reeder

(Editor's note: The following story is taken from notes made just minutes after an interview with Charley Wolters — and just prior to his death.)

Charles Wolters was slightly put out. As assistant secretary-treasurer of the Lake County Trust and Savings Bank, he had a right to be.

Why, he reasoned, should I have to work so late on Saturday afternoon? 1 p.m. was enough. It always had been.

But Charley was young. And ambitious. And discreet.

The bank's largest depositor had asked a special favor. He wanted Charley to help him count a million dollars!

"So, I did," Charley recalled amusedly. "I worked until late that Saturday afternoon. Money and checks were everywhere. We even dumped a huge chunk of the stuff in a wastepaper basket. We were hard pressed for space." Also sweating it out were Herman Harjes and Harry Jewett.

Frank S. Betz had just opened up the stock in his highly profitable surgical supply business for sale to the general public. (This building now houses the Queen Anne Candy Co. on Hoffman Street, but Mr. Betz' name still peers at the public rather defiantly on the west side of the building.)

From all over the country money had suddenly poured into this small bank at the Four Corners in Hammond. Eager money. Eager because this small town firm was rightly reputed to be well managed, tightly controlled and in a position to pay handsome returns.

Frank S. Betz was an unusual man -- some in town called him a "character." Small, rather rotund, fast-talking prolific in his profanity, he usually brooked no opposition -- anywhere.

Arthur Weiss still recalls with awe the time Betz and Henry Conkey battled over the payment of a small printing bill. Each man tore his clothes asunder in attempt to show that he wasn't "cheap."

Frank Betz held 2 things in low esteem: cigarettes and street car conductors.

It was not unusual for him to snatch a cigarette out of the mouth of some hapless individual, quite often one of his employees in the plant.

Wiggling his finger under the nose of said astounded unfortunate, he would begin in low -- and grim -- tones, "Young man, do you know what will happen to you? You'll wind up on the back end of a street car some day -- TAKING NICKELS!" This last was usually worked up to a crescendo of fury and it was a relatively strong man who did not tremble as Betz ground the "coffin nail" into shreds at his feet.

Preachers around town were delighted at such forthright action -- but troubled over his other obvious inconsistencies, such as ultra-strong language, with which he usually spiced his conversations.

The Lake County Trust and Savings Bank under the direction of Peter W. Meyn, was the trustee for the Betz Corporation in the work of making collections and issuing the stock.

And thus the count went on that Saturday afternoon. Backs grew weary. Perspiration poured down foreheads at times. Pens scratched, erasers dug deeply at various moments and adding machine tapes grew.

At last there was a slight shuffle. "Nine hundred ninety--" there was a smart slap of a final bill onto an alarmingly large pile.

There was a sudden hush. Everyone relaxed, albeit a bit wide-eyed. Charley even felt his own breath sucking in and the pounding of his own heart.

ONE MILLION DOLLARS.

They all stared fascinatedly. Even the owner. Extroverted, gusty Frank Betz. It was, they all agreed, a whale of a lot of dough -- Mr. Betz used other language, but they scarcely heard as they gave mental assent to his picturesque phrases.

Charley Wolters broke the silence. "Now, Mr. Betz," he proffered kindly, "the vault is open and if you'll put 'er in that suitcase, I'll put in the whole thing over the weekend."

Frank Betz roared in lofty protest -- and 'tis said a passing buggy was jolted into high speed by a nervous horse anxious to get away from such an unearthly blast coming from such a usually dignified building.

"Like Hell you will!" Frank S. bawled. "I'm gonna take it home and show it to Alice!"

Everybody gawked at that one. A million dollars going home?

"Yessireesir," Frank crowed triumphantly. "Going home -- with me."

It was.

It did.

The 1916 electric automobile didn't mind it a bit as it slid smoothly away from the curb and south on Hohman to Warren Street and the Betz mansion (now a funeral home).

And thus it was that a slightly dumbfounded Alice Betz about 10 minutes later stared amazedly at the contents of the suitcase.

"Maw! I did it!" her spouse bellowed happily. "I told you I would some day -- that I was gonna bring home a million bucks. There it is -- just take a look at 'er!"

He beamed expansively and fulminated some new strong words. It is said that his roars kept all the dogs for blocks around at a high pitch that evening, and added to the gay noises that came from the Betz residence.

But for a rather dignified Alice Betz a slightly uneasy Saturday night was spent picking aimlessly at a million dollars, just to get a good look at it, oblige her

deliriously happy husband, who made good a boast of his youth -- and to get the "touch" of it, no doubt.

And a relieved Charley Wolters made a special trip down to the bank on Sunday morning and opened up the vault to place the money therein.

"I," he confessed, "felt better then."

And how did the author of this slightly fantastic episode feel? It is hard telling, for Frank S. Betz was not a man to live on one plane throughout his life.

Did the money stay in the Hammond bank?

Charley grew pensive over that question. "As I recall," he replied gently, "that little capitalist didn't quite think we were capable of handling it."

It went to Chicago Monday afternoon, via a bank draft, leaving only pleasant -- but tremorous -- memories.



Betz Home



Betz home today
(Presently the LaHayne Funeral Home)



FURTHER NOTES ON FRANK BETZ

Dec. 1963 - May, 1964
By Arthur Weiss

My old friend, Frank S. Betz, was a most stimulating and effusive (if not explosive) character. The incident mentioned in the November issue with Mr. Conkey was not Henry, but with Henry's father, W. B. Conkey.

There are other interesting facets in Mr. Betz's life that are now forgotten, and were never known to any of the younger generation.

He was a real sincere conservationist and never hesitated to spend his time and money in the development of soil preservation through the planting of trees, in foreign lands as well as in our own U.S.A.

The little country of Palestine (now Israel), was just released from British control by the Balfour Declaration in 1917, and Mr. Betz visited there. He immediately saw that the desert could never be made productive on account of the lack of trees to conserve moisture from the infrequent rains. Mr. Betz contributed literally millions of tree seedlings -- free -- for planting in the desert and to build up forests. How they prospered I do not know; I wish I did. I do remember that Mr. Betz received some recognition from the Israel government. He preached re-forestation in this country at every opportunity, bringing the message to service clubs and other organizations that would give him the opportunity.

(Ed. Note: Arthur raises an interesting question: What did become of the tree seedlings in Palestine? As a former Boy Scout we recall faithfully planting a pine twig in our back yard. We'll check and see what happened -- 40 years have now elapsed! It is believed these trees came from the farm Mr. Betz had in Hobart. Anybody able to answer these questions?)



Black Walnut Tree. (Ed. Note: Mr. Betz distributed black walnuts in the Hammond Schools to encourage tree planting locally.)



HISTORY OF ARTIM'S TRUCKING

March 10, 1964
By Marjorie Sohl, Secretary

George Nelson introduced the speaker for the evening, Mr. Ralph Artim of the Artim Trucking firm in Hessville. Mr. Artim described how the Artim Trucking firm, known as one of the largest of industrial and specialized truckers, has grown from a single bus and truck service started by his father early in the 1900's to the two and a half million dollar a year business employing over 100 persons today. His father, a good mechanic, started out working at DuPont and in his spare time repaired bicycles and dinkies, the small gauge railroad cars.

In 1915 he got his first car, a Dodge, later a Ford truck, and then a bus. Each car added a new kind of service, from freight transporting to taxiing of people to and from work. This developed into a regular bus franchise.

Ralph Artim joined his father in the business in the mid-1920's when he was in high school. He became the eyes and ears for his father who could neither read nor write. The business then took on the ice trucking service, the filling of refrigerator cars with ice. During the depression the business survived by offering extra services for the same price and got industrial materials delivered faster.

In 1937, they started hauling for American Bridge and as a result of this got started in the specialized hauling of oversized pieces, especially steel girders for bridge and highway construction. This type of hauling has required the design and construction of special trucks and trailers to fit the various jobs. They have progressed from Model T trucks through two-axle trucks, tractor-trailer, tandem-trailer, and tandem-tandems. Now they are in the process of converting to all diesel powered trucks.



A part of the Artim Transportation System.



HISTORY OF THE MINAS STORE

April 14, 1964
By Marjorie Sohl, Secretary

George Nelson introduced the speaker and host for the meeting, Edward C. Minas III. The society was welcomed to the Minas store and invited to later view the Northern Indiana Art Salon's 21st annual exhibit in the area east of the meeting area. Mr. Minas presented a history of the present Minas store started by his grandfather, February 12, 1890, as a hardware store, at the southeast corner of State and Oakley. From a first day's business of \$2.62, it has grown in size and variety of merchandise to the present complete department store. Edward Minas, the founder, hired his brother, Emil, to help staff the original store. Emil is the only one of the eight Minas children still living.

Newspaper advertising became an important contact with the public early in the history of the store, even before the turn of the century. Most business was on a cash basis, but early ledgers contain the names of most of the early families in the area. First deliveries were made by wheel barrow, later by wagons, and then by trucks.

In 1894 the store at part of its present location in the middle of the block was erected on land purchased from Joe Hess. It was twice the size of the first store and three stories high, lighted by kerosene lamps. It was open five nights a week. After the turn of the century, the store again doubled in size and the present building was added west of the original building. This new building contained Hammond's first elevator. The symbol of the store's policy became a picture of clasped hands with the words "Confidence" and "Reliability" above and below the hands. These were the key words of Mr. Minas' success. Memories of the early store include the sale of umbrellas on the front sidewalk, advertisements painted on barns in the countryside around Hammond, coupons and trading stamps issued, bus service from surrounding towns with free lunch provided and trip back home in the afternoon, and the annual picnic since 1919.

The store has always been known as a family store and Mr. Minas kept in personal touch with his customers by being on the floor to meet them. More recent important dates include:

- 1925 -- the building of the warehouse at Douglas and Oakley and the providing of the first store-owned parking lot in Hammond;
- 1940 -- the complete modernization of the store;
- 1944 -- began the annual showing of the Northern Indiana Art Salon;
- December 31, 1949 -- the death of Mr. Minas, the founder;
- 1951 -- the complete air conditioning of the store finished;
- 1952 -- a cooperative employees' insurance plan started and the annual Christmas devotions started for employees the week before Christmas;
- 1960 -- erection of Hammond's largest car parking garage.

Phrases which have been associated with the store over the years include: "Service and satisfaction to its customers," "The Marshall Fields of Hammond," and "The Store with a Heart."



Edward C. Minas Store



JOHN SCHERER

September 1964 - April 1965
By Warren A. Reeder

Mr. Scherer was our featured speaker at the meeting of November 3rd, 1964, and drew a nostalgic picture of early Hammond.

He recalled that his grandfather Terre met Ernst Hohman and lived for a while in the "2-story log cabin on the north bank of the Calumet River." With amusement he mentioned the possible trade that Mr. Hohman offered his grandfather: All the land west of Hohman to State Line between Russell & Clinton!

The barter? 2 mules belonging to Mr. Terre.

The outcome?

"Grandma Terre wouldn't let him," Mr. Scherer recalled wistfully.

He further recalled a boatload of apples docking at the Hohman bridge on the Calumet River. "It was clear and we swam in it. The packinghouse wastes later deteriorated it. It would overflow occasionally and the ditches on either side would back up clear to the Four Corners -- we'd use rowboats in them. All the sidewalks were 3 to 4 feet off the ground."

Runaway horses were everyday occurrences and were mainly stopped by the sand ruts along Hohman Avenue at Douglas Street, where the paving ceased. This sand continued clear out to Dillner's Saloon -- now Dietrich's Sweet Shoppe.

"Indiana Avenue was the showplace of Hammond. All the best people lived there and had carefully terraced lawns."

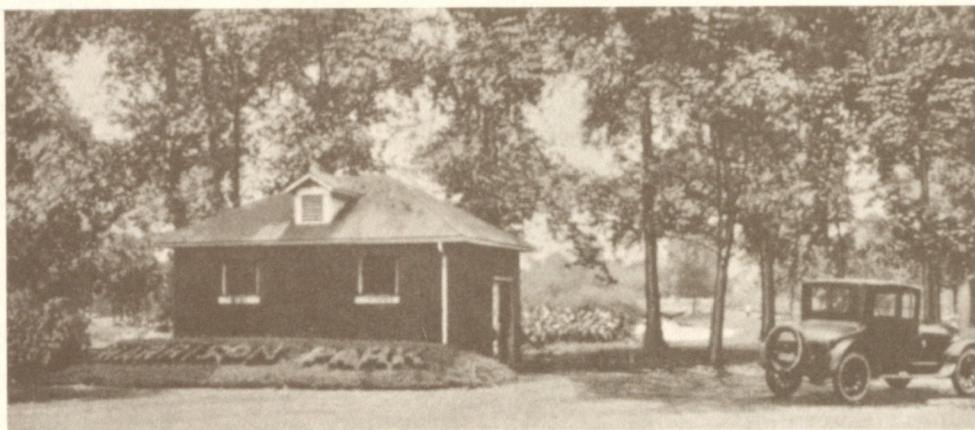
"Harrison Park was a cow-pasture and had the first barbed-wire fence I ever saw. The cows of 30 families of the town were kept here. I had to take our cow there each morning and call for her in the later afternoon. The men who watched after them during the day received \$1 per month from each family -- \$30 per month was a real tidy sum in those days!"

He revealed the interesting fact that the lagoons of Harrison park were dug out with horses and huge scoops, with Warren (a real estate developer of the era) doing the work. On the northwest corner of Waltham and Hohman was erected the fine home of Mr. Gostlin, an early real estate dealer. When "Ned," the blooded horse of the Gostlins died, he was pulled over to Harrison Park and buried under a 12" mound of earth. (Is he still there?)

When Harrison Park was the show place of Hammond, a discussion came up in the city council as to the swans that were to become so prominent. One alderman was cost conscious and thrifty. Instead of a flock of swans he wanted gondolas, patterned after famed Venice. The promoter of swans amiably fell in with this idea and to prove how eager he was to save money he moved that "We only buy 2 gondolas and then let nature take its course." (!)

Mr. Scherer told of the beautiful home of Jacob Rimbach, located where the north end of Goldblatt's store now is. He also reminisced about Katie Gibson, Dave Emery, Paul Klitzke and Dave Perry, as well as the 2 aldermen above mentioned, John Caine and John Pasquale.

Mr. Scherer proved to be an inexhaustible source of early Hammondiana.



Early Harrison Park



OLD CENTRAL SCHOOL

November 1965 - February 1966
By Warren A. Reeder

Old Central was many things to various people, as we found out. It was the first high school in town -- even when it was moved onto Russell Street in 1924 it secured another first, becoming the first building for Hammond Technical High School.

Mrs. Mary Peters, presiding over the meeting for the first time, presented our former prexy, Mrs. Vincent Bowers, who gave the background of schools in Hammond in general and from her memory told of Old Central.

The first meeting place for children was at the northeast corner of Hohman and the river, on land supplied by the Hohmans, probably about 1857. A frame building was erected at the Fayette Street site in '81 and the high school commenced in 1884, with the first class in 1887 as grads. In 1893 the brick building was erected which many present knew so well.

The first floor had the first 6 grades, 2nd floor front was the high school assembly room. It had a capacity of 120 and usually held about 30 pupils in class sessions. The 7th and 8th grades were also contained here -- and the principal's office. The 3rd floor had 2 classrooms and an auditorium-gym. By 1900 there were 106 pupils; in 1905, 135 pupils, 9 teachers, so it did not grow quickly. The first high school annual was published in 1905-06; Mr. Guy Cantwell squired the first of a long line of athletic achievements. Mr. McDaniel was principal, 1905-1909.

Nina Cravens, our next panelist, told of coming to Hammond in January of 1923, taking a cab to old Central from the Michigan Central Depot. Superintendent Caldwell's office was then in the courthouse across the street.

The Lincoln school, in charge of Miss Symmes, the

principal, moved the "children of Israel to the promised land," walking them from the old portable buildings to the new modern one story building. The grade schools then only had 7 grades (a throwback to WW I) and 10 months of school.

All teachers attended regular meetings at the high school on Saturday mornings: a 1 hour general lecture session followed by the teachers of each grade working in their own departmental units. Indiana University Extension classes were held in the Tech Building. In that same year of 1924, Mr. Caldwell provided men teachers for each grade school athletic program and music teachers for band and orchestra.

Alice Hess Marcus brought recollections of Hessville schools and John Wilhelm covered the period from 1916 to 1925 for Hammond High. The last class to graduate from Old Central was that of 1917, which included Walter Bell, Alex Rhind, Leo Arkin and Fred Beckman.

During 1917-18 Hammond High moved on over to the new building on Calumet Avenue, although it wasn't until 1922 that the 3 additional wings were added. 1922-23 saw the enrollment go over 1,000 for the first time -- 1,157.

The class of 1921 was the first to spend all 4 years in the new building.

The question and answer period that followed the panel was lengthy and spirited. Marie Landen was especially vivid with her recollections of early Tech events -- the lack of heat after the move in 1923, the absence of restrooms and the bad lighting system.

High above the streets of Hammond the discussion went on, with the lights all around to the northeast presenting a lovely panorama of beauty. Finally, we all regretfully left, realizing that perhaps never again would such a meeting take place, with so many of the participants who had lived through it again re-living their experiences.

NOTE: See picture of Old Central School being moved on page 160.



ST. MARGARET HOSPITAL

November 1965 - February 1966

Our meeting of November 18th was a very fascinating one.

Dr. E. S. Jones, dean of Hammond surgeons, who was celebrating his 49th wedding anniversary, presented his portion first and then was excused to go back to his family.

He told of how he had arrived in Hammond in September of 1916. The population was about 35,000 -- Glendale Park was considered "far south side"; W. G. Paxton had just completed a house 1/2 mile south of the Park and this was "out in the country." *(Ed. Note: Now it is 6620 Hohman!)*

Paying tribute to A. Murray Turner, he noted Mr. Turner was president of the street car line (Green Line) in those days. It ran from Gostlin Street to Conkey and east to the Standard Steel Car Company in the vicinity of Columbia Avenue.

Amongst other things he recalled was "Summer Street: one of the main east and west streets downtown but with the chuck holes worth your life to drive it . . . Calumet Avenue: built thru Wolf Lake, but considered a fine street, although cars at 35 and 40 mph would frequently have to be fished out of the lake!"

". . . if you turned on your sprinkling faucet it was not uncommon to get little fishes thru the line . . . pure water first necessitated a filtration plant, a sewage disposal plant and stopping Chicago from dumping sewage into the lake."

St. Margaret's was a 100 bed hospital with no training school. "In 1918 Dr. Melton and I went to Lafayette to see Mother Superior about an OB ward. She refused. We persisted and 2 years later were successful. It is now one of the most active departments of the hospital."

A medical staff, a nurses training school and internships followed in this order, from 1924 on. Our first lab had but 1 microscope and the personnel was trained by myself."

"Our pediatrics department is now one of the finest in the country. Following our new addition, we shall be able to do any type of work in the field of medicine that it is possible to do, unexcelled by any other hospital I know of."

"Our staff is now 150 -- our bed capacity has increased 5 times (to 500); Hammond's population has only grown 4.3 times. St. Margarets is big business now: the payroll is well over \$2,000,000 per year."

Following Dr. Jones, Sister Huberta told of the School of Nursing. Starting in 1919 with 5 probationers, 732 graduates have been thoroughly trained in the intervening 46 years to date. 36 of them were in the armed forces.

Sister Delphina gave a general explanation of the hospital, especially citing that 22,808 patients were cared for in 1963. She paid high tribute to Sister Adelberta, the first director, and the 6 succeeding directors.

Mrs. Marion Clark, top employee in terms of service mentioned some of her problems in the lab, which she helped to inaugurate and which has grown quite large during the years. In 1933, the earliest record available, 11,000 tests were run. In 1964: 531,000! "The one employee of 1925 has now grown to 40," she said.

"Our blood bank started in 1947 -- prior to that time transfusions were an emergency matter -- 45 minutes to cross-match the blood and then draw it from the donor. Now our total time to complete a transfusion is only 30 minutes. From a part-time pathologist we now have 2 full time ones, and they are on 24 hour call."

Mr. Crayton Mann, business manager, summarized all preceeding speakers with a paper of his own. The Lautman house at #30 Clinton Street, was purchased for \$9,000 and readied for 30 patients by the newly arrived 3 sisters of St. Francis on February 2, 1898. Besides doing all the work, the sisters also "went collection," he said.

In August of 1898, expansion got underway hurriedly. Lots at State Line & Douglas saw a corner stone of a new building in October 1899! From this has evolved our present mighty institution.

The library alone has 6,000 volumes; the pharmacy has prepared over 5 million prescriptions. Mr. Mann cited many other interesting facts that made us proud and awed over this fine hospital in our City.



St. Margaret Hospital



St. Margaret Hospital - One expansion.



St. Margaret Hospital - Another expansion.



OLD CONKEY PLANT

February 1967
By Warren A. Reeder

Mrs. Jean Wilson presided over our first official meeting of the season on October 4th, when some 35 members crowded into the briefing room of the (now) Rand-McNally Company on Conkey Street and listened fascinatedly to Mr. Chris Dubbs give a rundown on the history of this great printing establishment and its relationship to Hammond. Mr. Conkey's plant first got a start in Chicago's Loop back in 1873. Growing rapidly and desiring a new labor market, the Hammond site was selected in 1897 and the building finished in 1898.

George Newman was the architect and the "sawtooth" roof, still in evidence, designed to give light from the north, brought immediate approval and recognition in its field. The formal opening was July 4, 1898.

All power was by steam in those early days and most of the work was done by hand. Besides printing the Conkey Home Magazine, Sears-Roebuck catalogue and the Bible, Webster's Dictionary was a big item. The marbled edges on the latter were dipped by hand, as were the gold edges on the Bibles. A big sales booklet in those days were the poems by Ella Wheeler Wilcox and "The 2nd Battle" and the "Cross of Gold" speech by William Jennings Bryan.

In 1910 they were doing work for such firms with familiar names as Charles A. Stevens, Armour & Co., Siegel Cooper, Hibbard, Spencer Bartlett, Standard Oil, The Fair Store, L. Fish Furniture and International Harvester.

In 1912 they invited everyone "to come and see us -- 140 trains to and from Hammond each day!"

1913 saw a radical change: the Conkey Plant sold out their publishing company and henceforth only "hired out to others." Stock was sold (7% preferred) locally -- and

successfully. Employees were given a 10% discount.

On March 25, 1923, W. B. Conkey died and his son, Henry, took over. (Those at our Annual Meeting in 1963 will recall how the late Rev. Peter Langendorff drew a wistful picture of his dream of a new Episcopalean Church failing to materialize because of this death.)

When the Depression came and all Hammond banks failed, the Conkey Plant likewise suffered reverses. One of their large sources of income now became jig-saw puzzles and Shirley Temple picturebooks. They paid the bills, however, and also all the arrears in the preferred stock, as well as the bank loans.

In WW II they aided the military in printing training manuals.

Henry Conkey recovered from a stroke in 1933, but by 1948 he faced the fact that he had 3 daughters and no sons and was aged 63. He sold his interests to Rand-McNally but stayed on at the plant until his death in 1953.

The Rand-McNally Company, now in their 111th year and with the 5th generation of McNallys coming up through the ranks, have expanded the organization into Latin America recently.

Our group was split into 3 parts and taken on a tour of the plant. "Fantastic" seemed to be the general reaction to this huge printery. Mr. Earl Wiese, plant manager, explained that they are capable of printing 300,000 to 400,000 books per day and 75 to 100 million per year.

Among their daily chores are the encyclopedias of Grolier and Crowell-Collier, numerous atlases, Great Ideas Yearbook, Webster Dictionary, General Telephone directories, Book of the Month Club publications, Prentice-Hall, Look Magazine, Reader's Digest, Random House and Brownie Handbook!

We were all awed by the incredible speed of some of the huge machines that operate (some of them) on a 24 hour per day basis. One of their big problems: getting rid of waste paper -- "5 to 6 boxcars full per day."

Mr. Conkey was resourceful: when the Mormon Bishop was in his office regarding the printing of their Bible, he

quickly suggested that they "cut the size down to fit any coat pocket." (He got the job.)

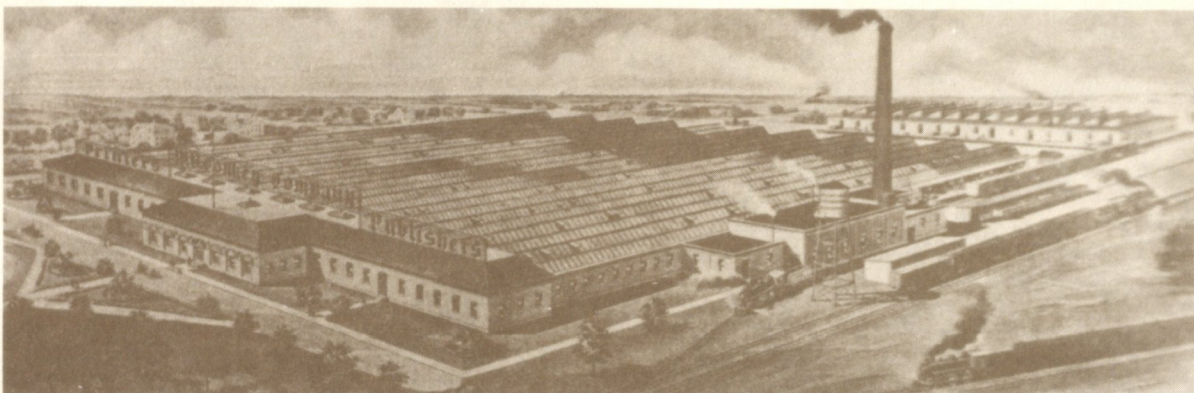
Mr. Conkey's encounter with the irascible Frank Betz was brought up during the question-and-answer period, as was the strict company policy of docking tardy employees. Mr. Dubbs deftly fielded those questions with a knowledge born of long association with the plant.

Our sincere thanks go out to the Company for being such gracious hosts and giving each one a souvenir at the end of the tour. After all, one does not see 17 acres "all under one roof" every day!

We also understand that Mr. Chris Dubbs, the narrator, is in Mercy Hospital in Dyer at the time we go to press. We will see that he gets a copy of this. Without his old-time pictures and knowledge, we fear that it would not have been the lively evening that it was.



W. B. Conkey Plant (1900)



W. B. Conkey Co.



W. B. Conkey.



"A BOOK REPORT IS NOT A BOOK REVIEW"

February 1967
By Warren A. Reeder

Mr. Jean Shepherd
New York City, N.Y.

Dear Sir:

I sidled up to one of my old 4th grade buddies the other day (He must hover around 54, 55 now), and whispered to him that I wanted to know if he had his Little Orphan Annie Secret Decoder -- that I had something in mind.

He edged away like he was mystified -- or was I mistaken about that startled look he gave me?

He denied it. But I knew. He was a member. It's just that some people get a little chintzy when they get beyond the 5th grade and think they are somebody just because they are president of something or another.

As for me -- you'd be surprised to see what I have been in my lifetime and how I can prove it: like my 2nd Class Boy Scout badge, my TTT (another secret) button which I got for 6 boxes of Grape-Nuts and 4 of Post-Toasties, my Palmer Method button, my Flexible Flyer Expert coasters' pin, my American Red Cross Beginners' badge and my Lincoln Grammar School 8th grade graduation pin of 1926.

Mr. Shepherd, your new book about Hammond brought a wave of nostalgia to this former 4th grader such as I have not experienced in a long, long while. Generally speaking, it is great.

I suppose that few people have the ability to reproduce with such photographic skill the memories of the 'twenties and 'thirties as seen from a child's stand-point.

As a writer you are unsurpassed here. Penny candies ... "Bank Night" ... and the forbidden book so innocently used as a book report was one howler of a chapter.

"... shipping water from every seam" is one of the most exquisitely turned phrases for that chapter that I have seen in many a year.

B-B guns ... firecrackers -- is there no end to this peculiar talent of yours?

I laffed and laffed at your description of the muck of Cedar Lake. It was perfect!

Sir, in many respects you reach the peak as a writer. I felt that Indiana was about to score again.

Now -- we suppose you had a good reason to call it "Hohman," Indiana instead of Hammond, outside of wiggling out of possible libel suits. We also suppose placing Cedar Lake near Standard Oil goes in the same reason and can be classified as "writer's license" which you are rightfully entitled to invoke.

We wince at some things, however.

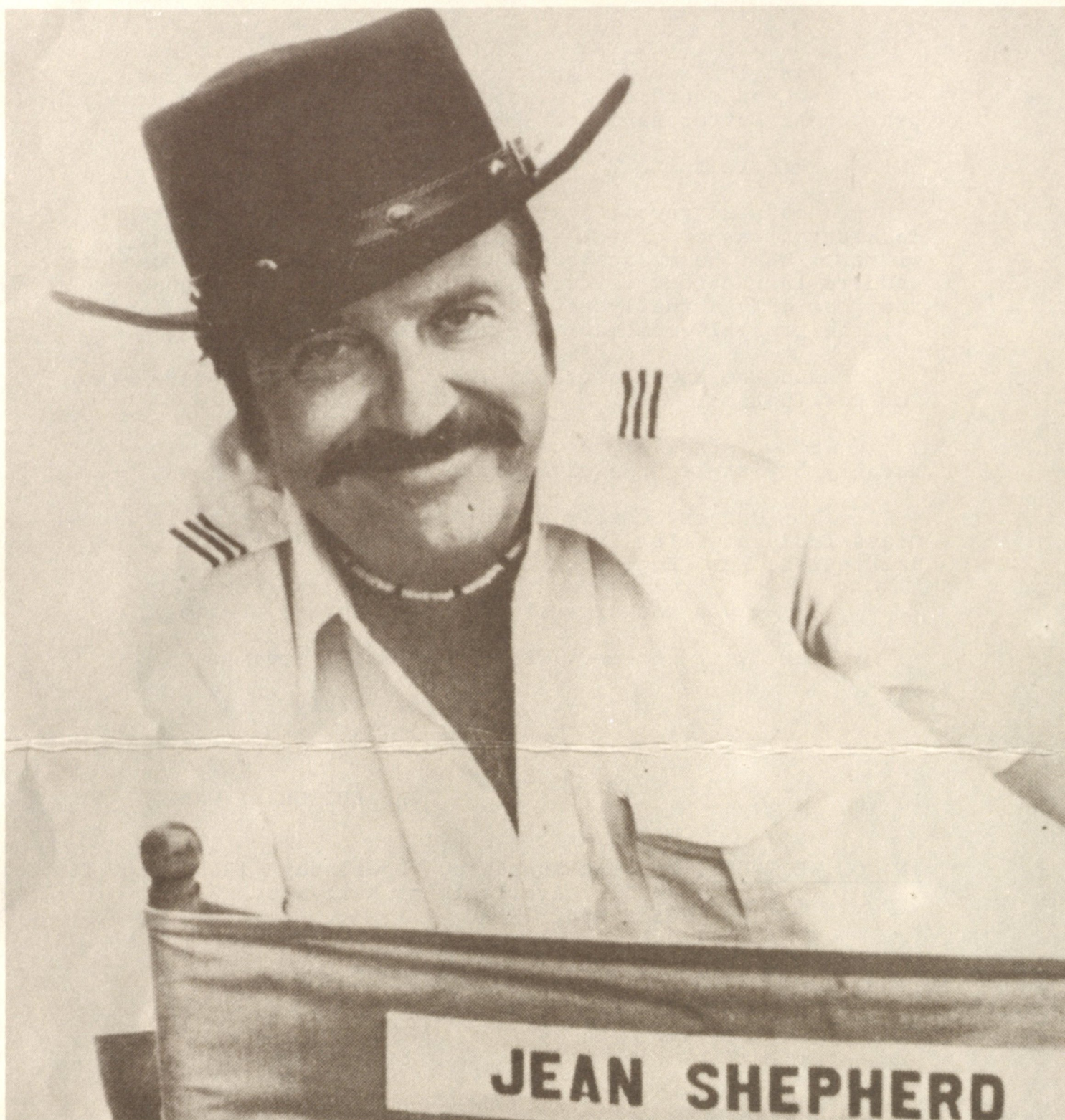
We are entitled to resent the implications that we all of this city are a bunch of beer-belching nonentities breathing lustily of iron ore dust, said dust constantly dripping down our foreheads and staining the whole town a reddish brown before it heads for the sewers.

Nor do we really appreciate the rather effete eastern culture ladled out in exotic chits from a haughty Olympian height and replete with French phrases available at the back end of any dictionary. "Booze" in Hammond is the same as in New York City and we yawn politely when you strive for erudition. But we love you inspite of this.

But a word as to the strong language. I realize that you are bound within the rigid orthodoxy of writing for the aging Manfred who heads the (smart aleck) Playboy slick paper porno-sheet. He demands it. Or maybe you like it this way. Anyway -- you do it.

"But that's the way people talk," you protest.

True -- but not all of them.



Jean Shepherd

Just the slobs. And Planned Slobbism is the current rage. So you overdid it, just like a little kid fixing his own peanut butter sandwich -- gobs larded on ad nauseam.

This is Kultur? Not in my books.

You will recall that James Joyce said that Booth Tarkington was a perfect example of a wasted life as a writer. What he meant to say was that Tarkington refused to indulge in the four letter words of the English language that can only actually be arranged in so many ways -- and all the possible combinations have now been reached.

And who knows anything about James Joyce today? Few. But Tarkington . . .

So we sincerely urge you to drop the daredevil naughty boy style of a preacher's son and try it anew.

You unquestionably have the ability to be a first-class Indiana writer in all the gripping tradition of Tarkington, Ade, Eggleston and the others.

Or -- you can be a second-rate James T. Farrell.

Take your choice. (But we'll still love you.)

Sincerely,

THE EDITOR -- WAR

IN GOD WE TRUST, by Jean Shepherd. Doubleday, 1966. pp. 264 \$4.50. Available at Katzy Book Shop, 3512 Ridge Road, Lansing.



FAREWELL

March 1967

The tall slender man stood in front of the assembled group and eyed them carefully. Kids, just kids, he told himself. He knew them all -- their parents, their background.

And now they were facing what every generation in this country has faced: WAR.

And then A. M. Turner, president of the 1st National Bank of Hammond, addressed himself to the paper in his hand. For some it might be their last time together, he mentally noted, and I must say the correct thing. He cleared his throat, the well-known twisted black cheroot for which he was famous lying at his feet, a tiny trickle of smoke arising from one end.

"Boys, you are about to enter the biggest game you ever played. Uncle Sam is to be your coach in this mighty contest. Under his able guidance and with your courage and determination, you will carry your colors to a glorious victory.

"I, for one, feel that no nation ever drew the sword with loftier motives, seeking neither territory nor revenge but demanding at any cost the preservation of its sacred honor and integrity and committed to the furtherance of the cause of freedom and peace to a wounded and bleeding world. But regardless of the cause or its justification, we are a part of a democracy, a people who through their president, his cabinet and congress, have bid us put on our armor in defense of our nation's honor."

Some of the boys stirred uneasily. What did he mean, calling them "boys?" Did he think they were just a bunch of kids? Why --- they were seniors! Seniors of Hammond High School, yet. Sure -- they hadn't graduated

yet, but they were going to get their diplomas for enlisting. After nearly 4 years of school this war stuff sounded more interesting than classes -- why all the hoopla of speeches and that stuff?

"We have gathered here this morning to bid God-speed to the fairest flowers plucked from Hammond's garden of manhood, as they go forth in response to the country's first call. Our country, like you, is only in the bloom of youth when compared with other nations, yet so mighty in power that while you may become homesick at times, I am sure you will never be lonesome, for soon you will be joined by two million comrades and soon after, if needs be to carry our flag to victory, ten million more brave men will join you, all armed with powerful instruments and munitions sufficient to bring order out of chaos and freedom to a bleeding world."

They perked up a bit. Now he was calling them men. Sounded better. John Phrommer glanced hastily to the east. The Standard Steel chimney was belching out black smoke. That, he told himself, is where the munitions are coming from.

"A little advice: I know you will give a good account of yourselves. Remember that the real sufferer of any war is the mother at home, who is thinking of you, praying for you all the day and in the stillness of the night. Do not forget her for she can never forget you."

Mr. Turner paused to conceal his own emotion. Some of those present had tears running unashamedly down their faces.

"Remember that you are Hammond's representatives and that Hammond expects you to honor her by honoring yourselves. Never fail to speak well of your home city -- the best city on earth -- your state and your country."

Some irreverent soul snickered a bit. Some of the words were almost drowned out in the chug of passing freight. He muttered something about getting out where at least the railroad trains don't use up half a guy's life, waiting on them at crossings. Some joined in the snicker.

"Have also high regard for and speak well of your commander-in-chief. President Wilson does not belong to the political party which has my fealty, but in this crisis I

marvel at his courageous power. God gave us George Washington when we needed a Washington; God gave us Abraham Lincoln, because an Abraham Lincoln was needed, and I firmly believe that God gave us Woodrow Wilson to be a light to our feet and a lamp to our path in this third great crisis of American history."

Fascinatedly they listened, these 19 seniors of the class of 1917. It was April 19th -- too soon for summer. But it was good to be alive. The sky was blue overhead and they were yet home. Fear of the unknown ahead gripped their hearts but their heads were carried high.

"When the clouds have rolled away, when the battle drums have been hushed, when the Nation's flag -- your flag and my flag -- has been furled in peace, may God grant that you may come back home sound and well to those whom you love and to those who love you, and honored for you will have been privileged to serve your country at a time when your country needed your service."

There was a smattering of applause and away they went, into the pages of history, repeating but a scene that was carried on all over the country that spring.

Those boys were: Arthur Wolters, Arthur Miller, John Phrommer, Gardner Voorheis, Kenneth Stewart, Charles McFarland, Jacob Brusel, Herman Krieger, Harry Newman, Wilson Hartington, Charles Krieger, Clyde Hudson, John Foley, Charles Hickman, Glen Warne, Winn Jones, Leo Arkin, Wilfred Hobbs and Fred Beckman.



A Hammond platoon goes to war (1917).



STATE STREET

February 1968
By Charles Delaney

It was one of those balmy days in spring when a wagon built for transporting heavy loads drawn by a team of ponderous horses, tugged and struggled with a burdensome load of lumber.

Although the van was equipped with broad rimmed steel tires, they cut deep into the pulverized sand, making progress slow and arduous.

The street had not been graded. It was just the top of a sand ridge, being used many times over for the delivery of loads of lumber. Homes were being erected in clusters along that devious route.

This was East State Street in 1888. My father walked down this forlorn wilderness. There were no sidewalks, but a not too well defined foot path along one side of the supposed street. Travel was further made difficult by scrub willows and bramble bushes that seemed to grow to the four winds wildly.

The material had arrived for his home and the house was to be "staked-out" that afternoon. (Ed. Note. This is still the same process on starting a house -- some things have not changed in 80 years!) The builder would commence erecting the next day.

I was to emerge in the fall and so it was that I came to be born on the land that has become the integral part of the new Hammond Library complex. It is a building of opulence and technical skill in its construction. We cannot visualize what the varied uses of this magnificent building will be eventually, but one thing is certain: it will always serve the cultural needs of many Hammond folk.

I have recently stood in front of this grand structure and let reverie lead me to our old front gate. How -- when in childish glee -- we rode that old oaken portal until the hinges were bent and only opened and closed with difficulty.

Next to our home lived Mr. Thomas E. Knotts, a man destined to become the mayor of Gary. He had returned from an Indian Reservation where he had been a teacher in the English language. He was a very personable man and was accomplished in Indian lore and dialects.

It is worthy in passing that Carl Sandburg felt it fitting to glorify Mr. Knotts in one of his writings.

(No lover of Carl Sandburg am I, but I recall with malicious glee a short time ago when I was called upon to present the history of Lake county to the Indiana Legislators at the Gary Hotel. To my right was the most recent former mayor of Gary -- then mayor. I suggested that he read that poem, as I did not have the time at the moment. From the startled look he shot me at the moment, I determined that he either did not know of Carl Sandburg -- and most certainly not of the poem. It can be found in its entirety on page 504 of Dr. Moore's History of the Calumet Region: available in our office at \$7.50, by the way (adv.). I have always contended that Carl spent more time at the burlesque show at 5th & Broadway (knowing of him as I do, than he did on the poem.)

But oh! Those thrilling rides on that wide swinging gate. How dear to the heart of the very young.

But, heck! Who can live life over?

(Ed. Note: Answer: Charles DeLaney. And by the way -- in his reverie over childish glee, he forgot the time when he tried to shoot out the court-house clock from the shed that rested about where Marjorie Sohl now has her desk. This story was contained in an issue of about 2 years ago. Used that old .69 calibre smooth bore and old Civil War vet had given him on loan and like to scared all the pigeons out of the courthouse permanently. The clock is still there. But not working.)



LESTER OTTENHEIMER

February 1968
By Warren A. Reeder

Lester Ottenheimer gave us an enjoyable evening in our November regular session, pulling out many of the facts of his life from a voluminous scrapbook long kept in his family -- since his birth in 1894 "in the revolving doors of what is now E. C. Minas' front entrance on State Street."

His father was in the furniture business, located about where Walt Milliken now is. At the age of 3 years, believe it or not, he was a cycle rider, riding for the Oriole Cycle Company of 220 Plummer Avenue. Although he did not mention the individual, this was in the era of Charley Van Sickle, the famous motorcyclist not far distant.

His family moved -- first to where Mages former store now is. "Pat Reilley, the mayor, lived across the street." Then south on Hohman, where the cottage still stands at #5644. In fact, Lester told of how he recently succumbed to an irresistable desire and knocked at the front door.

To the slightly astounded lady who answered the door, he politely identified himself as a former resident "many years ago" of the premises. Could he see it? Few people can say "nay" to Lester and he walked into the dining area and peered upward with a deal of satisfaction.

"There," he pointed dramatically, "is the spot where my father fell out of the attic when he went up there to fix a leak 67 years ago." The plaster patching is still visible and we have no doubt that the present tenant wonders at the tenable memory of an East Chicago attorney -- 67 years later!

Fondly he recalled the Grand Calumet River of his youth. Bass, bullheads, croppies all abounded there. In addition to these "good eating fish" which is father used to bring home on his way back from his own law office in East

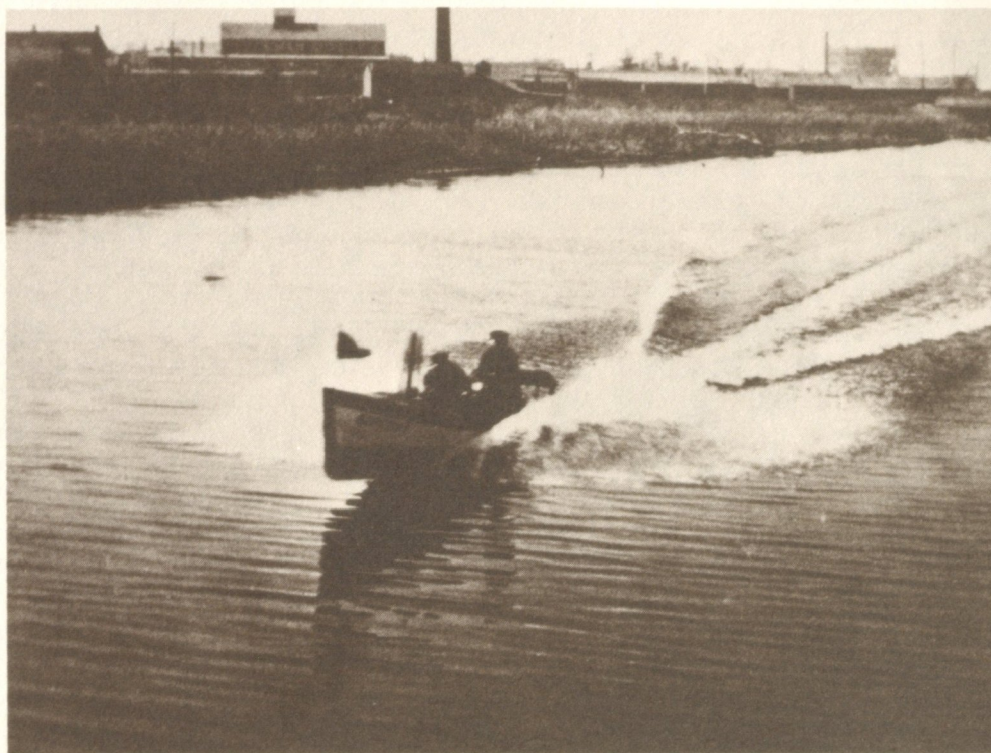
Chicago, he made an interesting observation on lotus lilies. "Only 7 places in the world do these lilies grow naturally," he averred, "and the Grand Calumet River was one of these spots."

He mentioned the pesthouse in "Jerusalem," where he would hold his breath when he passed by, the Simplex fire of 1899 and the fish in Harrison Park.

In a spirit of mimicry he recalled the Gillettes -- "Like father, like son." We have already mentioned Lundt and Minas. He recalled a specialty event of their store and how his father would -- in a spirit of fun -- pretend to steal silverware when they were invited out to dinner. Mrs. Lundt took it seriously and there was a distinct coolness in the area for many years.

Lester claims the oldest recorded birth record in Hammond -- January 4, 1894. Three generations of Ottenheimers have now been born in Hammond, and he recalled his mother making "Battenberg lace" for the era when St. Margaret's Hospital was first started.

We all enjoyed the evening, but we suspect that our speaker had the most fun of all.



Grand Calumet River



TAYLOR CHAIN COMPANY

May 1968
By Warren A. Reeder

The evolution of names in a firm is interesting. In June of 1873, Taylor & Wachs started their firm on West Grand Avenue in Chicago. In '83 Wachs divested himself of any interest and it became the Chicago Chain Company. In 1891 it was changed to Samuel Taylor & Son and in 1904, it was S.G. Taylor Chain Company. In 1956 "Inc." was added to the latter name. Even our headline above is not correct, but is the one by which Hammond residents refer to the company.

But they made chains! At first for the lake boat companies, railroads, and for agricultural purposes

David Taylor, our highly personable speaker for the evening of March 26th added to the above with a grin, "Fuel for the plant was free -- the coke for the furnaces was given to them to get rid of it!"

In 1904 the U.S. Chain Co. at Maxwell, Indiana, was purchased, operated independently until 1911. Then both plants moved to the familiar 141st street location with the big chimney and the name inscribed on it. (Where's Maxwell, Dave?)

Why Hammond?

Dave doesn't know. "I used to pump grandfather about those early days," he admitted sadly, "but I never thought to ask. Now he is gone."

Progress is always inevitable in the enterprising American corporation. That -- or perish.

In 1921 Edward Winthrop Taylor graduated from Cornell University and joined the firm with his dad. In 1924, he spent 3 months in Europe, spotted electric welding machines

there. Back in this country he introduced such a machine of his own design, completely changing their former process.

Edward Winthrop Taylor took over in 1936 and with the advent of the new steel alloys, another great change came into the business. "We were the first ones in the industry to introduce flash welding in 1936," Dave explained. "The alloy steels were stronger, too. They built us a great reputation in a hurry."

During the depression an interesting policy was followed. "We would employ a man for 6 months, then lay him off for 6 months and take on another old hand."

They are very proud of their WW II record. Displaying a large number of photos, Dave said that their plant was the first in the Calumet area to receive the coveted "E" award. They had also performed an excellent job for the Navy in WW I, which aided in their expansion at that time. "In early days our employment was at 40; it rose to 250 before WW II, increased to 350 during the wartime. It is less now."

The plant manufactures hundreds of types of chains. "It's a detriment to the trade," he revealed, "as we need some standards to cut down on this multiplicity of sizes, some of which are seldom used." He also stated that they have a small office in Pittsburgh.

Thus spoke the 4th generation of chainmakers. It was a most revealing insight into the founding and growth of a modern segment of Hammond.



Taylor Chain Co.



EARLY AUTOMOBILE DEALERS IN HAMMOND

August 1968
By Warren A. Reeder

We had our largest crowd in many meetings at "Hank" Schmueser's presentation of "Early Automobile Dealers in Hammond."

Hank brought over a huge board with photos and proudly displayed them.

Amongst some of the old-timers present were: "Scotty" Burgess, Dan Eder, Phil Bardens, A. F. Adelsperger, Fred C. Haehnel, Lester Klee, Ove Bruhn and Lynn Agnew, who came clear from Crown Point.

Also present was Tom McKinney and wife, who first suggested the program. Tom showed his beaming approval by joining the Society after the meeting.

Hank told of how his dad had come to Hammond 71 years ago, worked with Mr. Bradford in the paint store, and which business was sold to his brother in 1920. Although they sold other cars also, they have always sold Buicks.

In response to questioning, he told of how they sold cars in those early years when there were no such problems as trade-ins and financing. "We looked in the phone book," he said blandly, "decided that so-and-so could afford a car -- then we went out and sold him one." Walt Schreiber of the car financing division of the Hoosier State Bank inquired as to financing in those early days. "We financed our own," was the reply.

"One of the difficult things was getting rid of a franchise once you had signed a contract and then decided you didn't want it. It took us 4 years to divest ourselves of the Ford franchise.

Their eldest salesman in point of service is Mr. Jarnecke, 44 years. He gave credit to Max Schmidt as

the owner of the first filling station: corner of Hohman and Russell, where the public service building now is. Gas then sold at 8 cents per gallon. He also mentioned electric automobiles, including the one driven by Mrs. Belman, a familiar sight in town in the 'twenties.

"Doctors were the first individuals to use their cars all winter," he explained. Formerly they were jacked up in the fall, put under cover and rested until spring. Other people followed and now cars are year 'round necessities.

In response to a question from the irrepressible Irv Chayken: "Who is the wealthiest automobile dealer in Hammond -- BESIDE YOURSELF?" He only smiled good-naturedly.

He gave us material enough for research for many a moon.



Schmueser Buick



JOE HIRSCH

February 1969
By Warren A. Reeder

Joe Hirsch, who really doesn't appear any older than when we first knew him, presented the program on November 26th, 1968, at another large group. (Our calling committee works hard before each meeting.)

Joe claims to come from the era of "wooden sidewalks, gas lights and revolving overhead fans." His initiation was on West State Street, where most of the business was then located. His uncle came to town in 1892 and Joe's family in 1898.

"Anything east of Oakley Street was residential in those days," he reminisced. "Our store was next to the post-office and the Masonic Temple was also alongside us."

Living above the Millikan store on East State Street, he grew to regard the Erie railroad and the Monon Railroad as one -- "The black Erie" and "the red Erie," referring to the color of the cars. "Track elevation," he noted wistfully, "has always been a subject of discussion in Hammond -- but without results to date."

He recalled the night the G. H. Hammond Packing Company burned down, but how new industry came in to revive a city almost economically crippled, mentioning the Conkey plant specifically. He also talked about the Green Line street car company.

The disastrous days of 1929 came back to him: "9 banks and all the building and loans closed. Not a one of them stood up." With gratefulness he recalled the friendly \$5,000 loan made at the Merchandise Mart Bank in Chicago that enabled them to stay in business in those black days.

His family moved -- from State Street to Carroll and then to Kenwood. "That," he said, "was the end of the city."

Dillner's Saloon was located where Dietrich's Sweet Shop now is and Kenwood was a sand street with no improvements. When we went to school, we walked all the time, even at the lunch hour when we were sent home."

Joe graduated from Hammond High, attended the University of Michigan and the law school of the University of Chicago. "We all seemed to get an education in those days," he says quietly, "we all seemed to get around and -- we all had chores." He only practiced law for a short while and then went into the clothing store, one of his first loves and which eventually culminated in the present store on Hohman and the Woodmar branch known as Joe Hirsch & Son which he shares with his own son, Robert, the 3rd generation.

Joe seemed to stir memories in many others and the question and answer period brought forth other recollections from the audience.



(Far right) Joe Hirsch
(Far left) Son, Robert Hirsch



LIBERTY HALL

June 1969
By Warren A. Reeder

Ran into Derrill Reed the other day and he volunteered to write a story on the Liberty Hall of WW I. Derrill was a participant, his father was one of the two contractors, and they discussed it about ten years later. At this time, he took notes on the conversation. Thus he came up with the following.

Saturday, March 30th, 1918, was a big day in the City of Hammond. This was the day that the people of Hammond built the Liberty Hall on the southeast corner of Hohman and Fayette Streets.

It was totally of frame construction and was erected in one day, a tribute to expert planning, thorough organization, hard work, and the unselfish donations of time and money.

Hammond's population at the time was approximately 35,000, 5% of that population were in the Armed Forces. Those at home quite properly felt that the men at the front should be backed up by a building dedicated to the war effort.

There was, of course, some anti-war sentiment at large in those days, together with the usual pacifists. There were also many lukewarm individuals who had to be sold on the project in order to assure its success.

The work was under the direction of two of Hammond's leading general building contractors of that day -- John McClay and J. Wesley Reed. These men had a deep background of experience in building.

Drawings were completed some weeks before actual construction began. Funds were solicited and collected; much material was donated and the labor unions pledged their whole-hearted support. Without this teamwork it would have been impossible to accomplish.

There was, of course, some preliminary work done prior to the big day. The site had been marked out, lumber had been delivered and was neatly stacked and labeled as to its use. A big power saw was set up. It was a crude saw by today's standards, equipped with motor and a belt drive.

Many meetings had been held to formulate plans and decide on a time schedule. The work was planned to be completed within a 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. day. A briefing session was held the day prior to construction for the foremen and other supervisory personnel. The carpenters and laborers were to start the first thing in the morning. The roofer, painters, plumbers and electricians were to report for work in the afternoon.

I remember well the 7:00 a.m. starting of the project. My father, J. Wesley Reed, was holding the blueprints under his arm. John McClay fired a shot gun into the sky to signal the start of the work. About 250 men promptly caused a beehive of activity to come into being. The men were divided into 25 groups, each consisting of a foreman, six carpenters and three laborers. There were a dozen or so high school age boys, of which I was one, to carry nails, run errands and provide the drinking water.

From the very first, the construction work progressed ahead of schedule and by the noon hour, the work was fully an hour ahead of time. Trucks and wagons shuttled back and forth from the building material dealers to the work site.

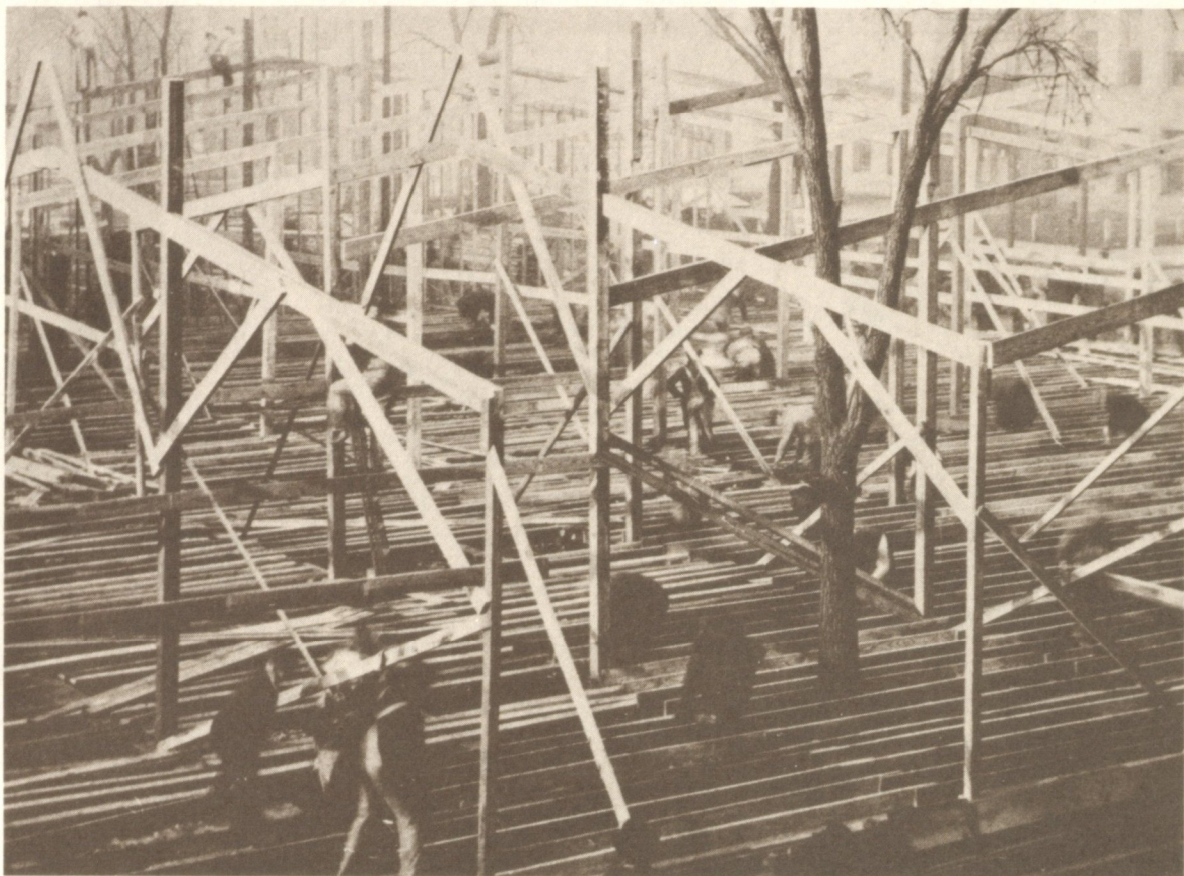
The building was 140 feet by 104 feet and was L-shaped as it was "built around" the old Tech School. It contained about 10,000 square feet of floor space. The building was planned as an office building and auditorium to house all of the war activities in the city. Patriotic meetings of all kinds were held there, quarters were furnished to the Red Cross, Liberty Bond sales, personal and other organizations devoted to the war effort. I do not recall how long the building was in existence, although it was later used for an auto show and some other non-war uses.

I fail to remember if the workers that day brought their own noon-day lunch or if lunch was furnished to them. At the noon hour there was a flurry of activity as the women "got into the act." A group of six women dressed in overalls and preceded by a little brass band invaded the premises, were promptly inducted into the Carpenters Union and drove their share of nails into the building. (If some of these nails had to be straightened out later, it was never made public.)

In order to speed up the work, doors and window sash were fit into their frames out in the yard and each whole unit installed into the structure. Little did these men realize that they were doing something that would many years later be common practice as pre-fit doors and windows are now.

The building was completed about 4 p.m., well ahead of the 6 p.m. deadline as set in the original schedule. Partitions were in, painting completed, lights on and plumbing working, and all the seating for the 1800 seat auditorium had been built on the premises that day.

There was a parade down Hohman Street and a program inside the building with the usual speeches, recognition of the various organizations and individuals who participated and a war bond sales presentation. At 7 p.m., just 12 hours after the start of construction, the workers held a dance to celebrate the occasion.



Construction of Liberty Hall (1918)



Dedication of Liberty Hall



Liberty Hall with Old Central School
in background.



ANCIENT HAMMOND: THE INDIAN BURYING GROUND

April - May 1970
By Charles B. Delaney

THE QUESTION:

Would you have any idea "just where the Indian burying ground was located just south of the river opposite the Towle distillery?"

Warren A. Reeder

I am glad you asked that question, Warren. For sometime I have witnessed your efforts through "prodding the subject" as to the Indian burying ground.

I have refrained from entering any discussion because my thoughts are a trifle different in this bit of history. At least I hope to add a new thought about some of the people that lived, worked and thrived in "Ancient Hammond."

Let's turn back the clock; way back to the era circa 1875. There existed a plot of ground that was west of Hohman which faced to the south by the Michigan Central Railroad, extending north to the Grand Calumet River. This property was only part of the possession of the George H. Hammond Packing Company. The rest extended beyond the Illinois-Indiana State Line.

Facing Morton Court on this property was built the office structure of the forementioned company. It is very old now and crumbling. The most of this part of land is now owned by the John J. Brehm & Son Fuel Company. Their tenure extends along the Michigan Central right-of-way to the Monon tracks.

It is now named and referred to as Industrial Road. I am not certain as to its name during the early period. At a considerable distance back from this lane were built three luxurious mid-victorian houses. These residences I well remember, for one flouted a porte-co-chere large enough to accommodate a span of horses and a phaeton rig.

In these homes lived George H. Hammond family, for a brief time; K. H. Bell family and the M.M. Towle family. Later on the Charles Kasson family lived in one of these superlative houses.

Folks passing on Hohman Road could gaze over the open territory into the back stretches of the development. Of course, there was not a great deal of construction on the west side of Hohman to the river which provided a clear view of this expanse.

My mother came to Hammond in 1870, she was five years of age, later she attended a one room school on the east side of Hohman, "down near the bridge."

The one room school house was a contribution of . . . Towle. On Sunday it was used as a house of worship. Actually, it became the first church in Hammond. Porter B. Towle was the first preacher, though not ordained as such.

In passing let me say this was the same Porter B. Towle, the editor-in-chief of the Hammond Republican, who was greatly known for his controversial columns and idiosyncrasy in publishing.

Reverend Timothy H. Ball, who was accredited as one of the most dedicated educationists of his time, was my mother's teacher. Later A. A. Winslow followed and subsequently became a U.S. Counselor to Guatemala.

One morning on their way to school, there was gathering in the Towle gardens and Porter B. Towle was seen with bowed, uncovered head midst a small group of friends and relatives committing a member of the Towle family to the earth.

A like sad happening took place on several occasions as the years rolled by.

I do not know whether any of the bodies were removed to Oak Hill Cemetery.

The Indian burying ground remains a mystery to me.

Charles B. DeLaney



RIMBACH AVENUE

March 1971
By Warren A. Reeder

Dr. Robert Gillis sent us some fond memories of Rimbach Avenue that he had about 1910.

Rimbach Avenue was formerly the street for the elite of Hammond. One cannot help but notice the surviving remnants of homes in this once fine area.

Josephine Krinbill Rowe and Inez Becker sat down with your editor about a year ago and reminisced about both sides of the street, and this was placed on tape where it is now in the Calumet Room for future studies. In order to keep this valid we took pictures of each house on both sides of the street, numbered them and put on the street address, so when they discuss it on tape, it is easy to look at these old structures and see the proper house that is being discussed. Some of them no longer exist, and we were too late to get a picture of the old E. C. Minas home. Dr. Gillis follows with some reminiscences about a walk down the north side of Rimbach from the alley to Morton Court.

A lot of changes have occurred in the neighborhood; most of the folks who built the area have passed to their reward. Only the Courthouse and the Hammond Building stand today to bear witness to what used to be.

All the changes prompt me to review that corner and take a stroll down Rimbach Avenue (as it was named then).

At the alley-northside, rises a new building to house the growing Chicago Telephone Company. Seems to me I see a piece of Indiana limestone on which is engraved the date 1913.

Next door west is the home of Murray Turner and "Aunt Mamie" who "kept house" with her daughter.

This property was later purchased by Dr. H. C. Groman and converted into his home and office (by addition about 1912).

Next door lived "Uncle Henry Bicknell with his wife and daughter, Nellie."

"Uncle Henry," as he was fondly known, was a druggist whose store was in the old Hammond Block (at State & Hohman)--the rendezvous of doctors and politicians who gathered to get "Uncle Henry's" opinion of current events and news and kid him along wherein he differed. He was pestered (but he loved it) by masters such as Oberlin, Sharrer, Kelly and Clark.

He sold his store to Bob Jennings who carried on for years.

Next door was occupied by a recent newcomer named Thum. Thum was a graduate German chemist and then head of Grasselli Company in East Chicago. He had a charming wife and daughter. The daughter eventually married -- Paxton, nephew of Paxton lumber dealer, later banker.

Next door to Thum's was the imposing home of Joseph Humpfer.

All these homes were on rather narrow lots that left practically no room for side lawns.

Next to the Joe Humpfers, came the parish-house or modest manse of the Episcopal Church then occupied by Rev. Smith, who later developed an insurance agency and sold a different type of insurance.

A vacant lot was between the manse and the steepled frame Episcopal Church which was then next and was later moved, enlarged, and now stands at Hohman & Detroit Street.

The site of the former church is now occupied by the Neidow Funeral Home. This brick building (now modified) was the former home of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Rimbach, which faced Sibley Street and was moved around to Rimbach Avenue to make room for an extension of the Lion Store westward on Sibley.

Next west was the substantial brick home of Lawrence Becker who later became Mayor of Hammond, later Judge Becker; then, after a sojourn in Washington, D.C. as a

Treasury Counciller, he was elected to a Judgeship in East Chicago. Two daughters and a son still survive him.

Next door was a one-story home occupied by Oscar Krinbill, wife and daughter.

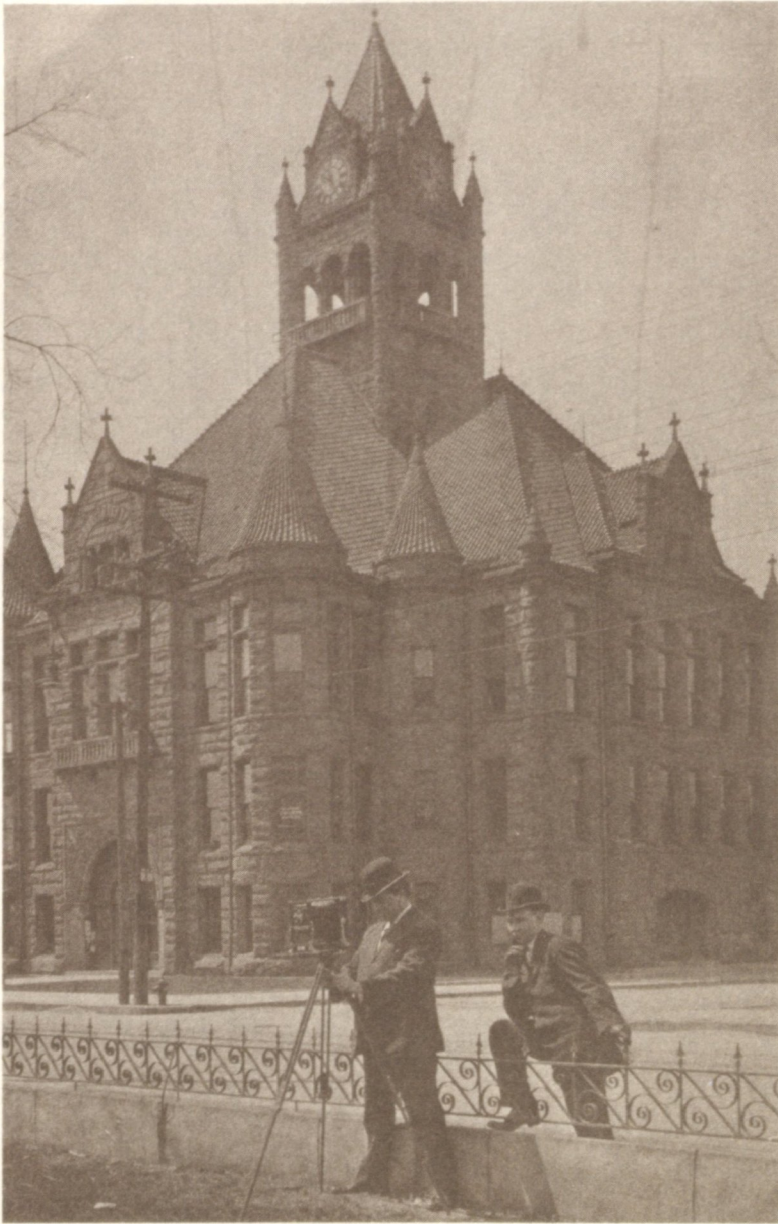
Oscar Krinbill was a druggist whose store on Hohman near the "four corners," became (in the war) the first telephone exchange in Hammond. Oscar became the first Manager of the Chicago Telephone Company in Hammond and continued as such until his death, when he was succeeded by Fred Wiedeman, as Manager.

Finishing out that block, stood the two two-story houses occupied by the proprietors of the Lion Store, Leo Wolf and Carl Kaufman.

That was a distinguished array or neighborhood of Hammond's prominent citizens.

Especially so when you crossed Rimbach Avenue and found the homes of Fred Humpfer and Paxton, County Treasurer Ward Mack, and the new mansion of E. C. Minas at the corner of Ann Street.

Thus ends a pleasant memory lane down Rimbach Avenue when the Court House was young (and now stands condemned).



Hammond Superior Court House (1902)



The home of Jacob Rimbach
(Now the Neidow Funeral Home)



VERLYN MACK

March 1971
By Warren A. Reeder

Verlyn Mack is a great-grandson of a Dutch immigrant who left Holland with his family and settled in the "Saxony" area of Hammond at what is now 174th & Tapper Avenue.

His grandfather married a Hartman girl from North Hammond, settled in one of the Hartman homes at Indiana and Hamlin Street in the vicinity of the old public library near Central Park. To them was born Peter Mak in 1849, Verlyn's grandfather.

They then took up residence in Sobieski (now Calumet City, Illinois) on a large farm. There are definite memories of the present City Hall on Wentworth as being "in what was the best berry patch in the region."

Verlyn's grandfather was elected Village President and during his regime the name was changed to West Hammond.

By his own assertion, "I was born January 20, 1919, in a house on the banks of the then clean and unpolluted Grand Calumet River." The family name was Americanized to Mack when he started to school. He commenced school in Burnham but the farm was given up and he came to live in Calumet City, graduating from Thornton Fractional High School in 1937.

He married in 1941 to Grace Barron, daughter of a pioneer East Chicago family. They have one son, Lance, 22, who will graduate from college in our present month of June.

Verlyn received the purple Heart during W.W. II for wounds in Italy. After the war was over, he was the first veteran to be appointed on the fire department under the Smith administration. Rising through the ranks he became Deputy Chief before his retirement in 1968 after 23 years of service. He is presently employed by the City of Hammond and makes street signs. In this latter occupation he renews acquaintances all over town and even with the founders of Hammond, when he stares in the face names like "Towle Avenue," "Warren Street," etc.



CAPTAIN WATTS

April 1971
By Ellen Mattwig

Gibson Station was a place where trains on the Michigan Central Railroad made a stop if there were passengers to board the train or be let off. The town extended as far Northeast and South as one cared to walk through the heavy timber and underbrush. At a distance of about two miles to the south and a little to the west of Gibson Station, Captain Grandfather Watts, with his wife, two daughters and one son, hewed out a home.

In later years, where he settled was given the name of Hessville.

Grandfather cut down trees and with them built a log house. He also cleared the land that he farmed. This indeed was very slow progress for when he had his garden produce ready to sell, the nearest market was at Chicago, a distance of about 30 miles. The only mode of hauling through the county, in those days, was wagon and ox team. What would these grandchildren and great-grandchildren think today if they were compelled to arise at 3 o'clock in the morning, hitch the team of oxen to a load of garden truck (produce) and start to market, doing very well to reach there by nine o'clock that evening, put up your team, stay over at night, then sell your whole load of produce the next day for eight, or at the most, ten dollars, start back and reach home the third day?

Quite often the wolves and foxes would kill the chickens and young calves and there were hardships to overcome on every hand. While the woods held dangers to domestic life, they also held great blessings for the pioneer family, for they furnished fuel and food. Wild game such as duck, geese, rabbits, squirrels and birds in great numbers made their homes in the woods and nearby marsh lands.

In those days the pioneer family often partook of a black-bird pie or scrambled eggs taken from the nests of wild duck or prairie chickens. I have heard my mother say it was not an uncommon occurrence when she was a young girl, to awaken on a cold winter morning and find from one to six wild deer feeding at their haystack. I wonder how many here today have ever seen such a sight?

The nearby rivers and smaller streams were loaded with fish and turtles and many a hollow stump in the woods held pounds of honey that had been stored away by the wild bees. There were also many kinds of wild fruit that grew in the woods, such as blackberries, huckleberries, strawberries, cranberries, crabapples, cherries, grapes and plums. The children worked very hard gathering these wild fruits not only for their own food, but to sell on the market as well.

In the winter there were great numbers of wild fur-bearing animals such as muskrats, mink, fox 'coon, skunk, that could be trapped and the hides sold. Young people, in those days, your parents and grandfather had to have their shoes made from the hides of their own cows. Then, in later years, when horses took the place of oxen, horse hide was used to make harness and various other articles used around the farm and the house. The children did not wear silk stockings and party dresses to attend school and for every day wear. Their best dress was made of calico. They went barefoot as many months as they possibly could out of each year, in order to save a pair of shoes. Their stockings had to be knit by hand, also their mittens, and there was no ready-made clothing to be bought. Everything had to be made at home.

Grandmother used to weave straw hats for grandfather, the children, and herself, from cane brake gathered from the marsh. When I was a child, my mother had one of the hats that grandmother had made. We kept it for many years as a keepsake. In the pioneer days, children walked many miles to attend school or church and were glad of the opportunity to get what education they could. They did not have an auto or airplane to take them many miles in a few minutes as they do today.

When we look over this part of the country today and see the network of railroads, street cars, paved roads, factories and thousands of dwellings, it is inspiring and thrilling to think that this family, this very assembly are

branches of one of the first men who settled in Lake County and helped to lay the foundation of inhabitation here. Many of you who are here today, still recall the building of the old Hohman House at Hammond. For many years it was the grandest building and landmark through this part of the state.

I have heard my mother speak of trading with the Indians, getting mocassins and hides from them and giving them salt in return. But I do not know where their trading posts were located.

All I really know of the Indians of this part of the country is that when I was a child, we often found flint arrow heads and stone tomahawks that our parents told us were used by the Indians. The older relatives will likely know more about them.

Ellen Mattwig
8th Annual Watts Family Tree
8/26/29



VERNON ANDERSON

July - October 1973
By Warren A. Reeder

One of the most fascinating meetings we have had was in April, 1973, when Vernon Anderson, former mayor, spoke to us. Vern, born in Valparaiso, brought to East Chicago when he was 2, moved to Hammond at the age of 6.

A graduate of Hammond High, (via Riverside and Washington schools), he went to work at the Harbison-Walker Refractories in East Chicago at the age of 16. By his 19th birthday, he was production manager, in charge of 500 employees. He was, however, forced to leave the plant because of his health.

He chose the real estate business as his next move and became an independent realtor for a number of years. One night he went to a city council meeting because of a neighborhood problem and was stung by a remark from Frank Martin, also a realtor, when he made the challenge, "Young man, why don't you run for councilman if you want to talk."

Vern did just that, worked door-to-door in eight precincts and won the election. The Republicans were weak at the time and it came as somewhat of a surprise. Out of 55 precincts they only had 29 committeemen. Vern promptly went to work, ran a school for new recruits and taught 'em how to poll as he asked for "outstanding Christian people in the organization."

Then came the invitation from the party to run for mayor. He was doubtful, but finally decided to try, faltered a bit when Wally Thornton ran against him in the primary. Wally was then president of the school board and had a large following. Again he turned to the house meeting plan, started meeting at 11 a.m. and continuing on for eight more meetings, usually winding up at 11 p.m. at night. We still feel that Wally did not expand his campaign far enough out of the downtown area, where he was well known.

He won the primary in a rather close election and, with 400 house parties behind him, tackled another 400 or 500. Subsequently he was advised that "you need one big meeting." He was hesitant but consented and was surprised that the Hammond High auditorium was jammed for it.

He won by 800 votes, the first Republican mayor in 17 years, and was sworn in January 1, 1947. He followed Bert Smith, also a realtor, thus keeping up the tradition of "Realtors only" in office that Frank Martin had started.

The City Plan Commission came into existence under the direction of Lawrence V. Sheridan and a Master Plan was drawn up. Frustrated because he couldn't hear a speaker at the Civic Center, he saw to it that it was acousticed. Garbage trucks were modernized, as was police and fire equipment. The latter two departments were also re-organized, keeping Tom Martinson as police chief as per the recommendation of the FBI.

Vern likes to look at Purdue University in Hammond --- he worked for it. "Del" Anderson of his Plan Commission exerted considerable influence and Hammond got the school. Closing up old infected swimming pools, he built modern ones -- three new pools at Douglas, Edison and in Hessville parks. Clean-up, paint-up, fix-up resulted in a National Award one year. He was proud that the 173rd street fire station was built at 1/2 the cost of a similar station in East Chicago.

He also battled high with organized labor, aiding in settling nine different strikes. Relations with the city council were good, as he met with them every Saturday morning.

Vern credits the 1951 Hammond Centennial as one of the greatest events that ever came to Hammond, drawing our people together in a manner not seen before or after. He feels that it was an "era of good feeling when people were proud to call Hammond their home." This was done with an average tax increase of 7-1/2 cents for the Civil City.

Vern feels that the Toll Road and its subsequent construction through South Hammond contributed to his defeat after two terms for a total of eight years. He was beaten by 449 votes -- "I should have quit when I was ahead," he said wryly.

He almost made it back to the real estate business when Governor Harold Handley tapped him for his campaign and he became assistant to the governor during that regime. He described little political maneuverings such as not pressing in win in conventions too early. Mr. Handley was running against George Craig and Vern skillfully secured the nomination for him.

Vern feels that Handley's biggest error was in not vetoing the right-to-work-law as was his advice. When he ran for Senator, he was also advised not to try and lost by 3,000 votes, almost the correct number Vern had predicted he would.

Vern had a national reputation for statewide work by now and Richard Nixon asked him to lead his first campaign, which he did, winning Indiana by 55,000 votes but not enough to overcome the electoral votes of other states pumping for John F. Kennedy.

Since then Vern has retired to Hammond, manages his property and steers clear of politics, although we have the feeling that if somebody pressed him, he would be right back in the thick of it again!



Vernon Anderson



CALDWELL AND DRAKE

March 1974
By Warren A. Reeder

While the wreckers were razing our court house in Hammond, I got to wondering about the men who built it almost 75 years ago. And when I read the letter from the builders which was removed from the corner stone, I decided to find out more about them. They had come from Columbus, Indiana, and in as much as my younger daughter lives there, I started asking about the builders when I visited Columbus.

I was a little fearful that I might not find much of a story here. Maybe they "lost their shirts" on the next job. Or maybe the next building fell down and wiped them out. But my fears were groundless. They were well known citizens in their community, took an active part in the life of the city of Columbus, and built some of the most handsome public buildings in Indiana, Arkansas, Illinois, Missouri, Ohio, and West Virginia. They were connected with various business enterprises in addition to their building company and served in various capacities in these companies. Each of these men were farmers and owned and operated big farms all their lives.

GEORGE W. CALDWELL

Mr. Caldwell was the senior member of the building company but was "senior" by only two years. He was born on a farm in Delaware County, Ohio, and was the eldest of five brothers.

George was ambitious of acquiring an education. With \$20 given him by his father, and no further help from home, he worked his way through four years at Valparaiso Normal School. After graduation he taught schools near his home in LaPorte County and was principal of grade schools in Hanna, Indiana, for three years. George married a woman from St. Joseph, Michigan, whose parents were among the pioneer settlers of Michigan.

George Caldwell engaged in the insurance and real estate business in LaPorte, Indiana, for about one year and then came to Columbus, Indiana, where he continued in the same business until he had the largest insurance and real estate business in the county.

Caldwell was first and always a farmer and throughout his lifetime owned and operated a 600 acre farm six miles south of Columbus.

LESTER DRAKE

Mr. Drake, the junior partner, was noted for his untiring attention to the details of the building business, a very capable partner to Mr. Caldwell who was the executive of the business.

Lester Drake was born in Bartholomew County and lived on his family's farm in Flatrock Township north of Columbus. He engaged in farming, as did Mr. Caldwell, and also entered the insurance and real estate business before joining Mr. Caldwell in the building business. He was elected to the city council about the same time as Mr. Caldwell and their early careers seemed to follow each other quite closely.

Lester was educated in the Columbus public schools and the high school and he studied one year at the Hartsville, Indiana, College.

CALDWELL AND DRAKE

The partnership started out building big dwellings in Columbus, Indiana, and then specialized in public buildings and court houses. Some of the buildings to their credit are the Putnam County Court House at Greencastle; Superior Court House at Hammond; Crawford County Court House at English; Stark County Court House, Knox; Ottawa County Court House at Port Clinton, Ohio; Wood county Court House, Nash School, and the Camden Opera Block and the Guaranty Trust Block at Bakersburg, West Virginia; and the Wetzel County Court House at New Martinsville, West Virginia. While in West Virginia, the firm erected three State University Buildings at Morgantown and two state Asylum buildings at Huntington and the state capitol annex at Charleston.

It wasn't long before the Caldwell and Drake firm got

a reputation for excellent workmanship and speed of construction. Contracts were getting bigger all the time and their reputation was preceeding them. Their methods of construction were the talk of the day.

One biographer which I read stated that Caldwell and Drake were written up in the trade journals of the day for their speed and daring in completing buildings in record time.

The West Baden Hotel was an example of this. They were awarded the contract without competitive bidding, built the hotel in eight months and two days including the largest dome in the world at that time.

The firm also built the Perryville, Missouri, Court House, five asylum buildings in Gallopolis, Ohio, the state capitol at Little Rock, Arkansas, and many, many others.

I found one reference to a brother of Mr. Caldwell who was their superintendent in the field and I can believe that he was the unsung hero of the firm.

The Caldwell and Drake partnership also built the Palace of Agriculture at St. Louis. This building covered 22-1/2 acres, the largest building under one roof in its day and it was built in 45 days. They also built the Palace of Horticulture and 21 other buildings at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition at St. Louis.

Mr. Caldwell and Mr. Drake also organized the Caldwell and Drake Iron Works, the National Machine Company, Indiana Handle Company, Mutual Life Insurance Company of Illinois, Federal Surety Company of Indianapolis and the Citizen's Guarantee and Trust Company of Parkersburg, West Virginia. In each case the men followed the usual form. Mr. Caldwell was the president of the companies and Mr. Drake was the Treasurer and Secretary.

Yes, our Superior Court House in Hammond was a superior building built by a superior builder back there in 1902. As The Times reported one "sidewalk superintendent" saying as he watched the building being razed, "They don't build them like that any more."

ED. NOTE: I want to thank the young woman who presides over the Bartholomew County Historical Society office every afternoon. I also want to acknowledge the help of Mr. Ross Crump of Columbus, Indiana.



Phil Smidt's on Indianapolis Blvd.



Phil Smidt's on Calumet Avenue.



PETE SMIDT

March 1975
By F. Derril Reed

Our February program brought out a packed house when Mr. Smidt, describing himself as the owner of "a hot dog joint on Calumet Avenue," launched into a highly interesting account of what was once a large industry in Hammond, albeit a risky one and not an extremely high paying one, either.

This was the ice-cutting industry on Wolf Lake. The lake was much larger in those days, too, reaching from Roby to Angelo's Supermarket and from Atchison Avenue to the Pullman Works on the west.

Phil Smidt got off a train in Hammond because he needed a pair of shoes. He worked to get the money for them and then was refused his pay, although they gave him the shoes. He rose rapidly in the ice-cutting industry to the superintendency of what amounted to a year 'round job and thus he stayed for 25 years -- until 1910, when he quit and started in the restaurant business.

"There were four icehouses for storing ice in Hammond," Pete explained. "#1 was on the site of the present Daly Hall of Amaizo, #2 and #3 were further south and #4 was on the site now occupied by the trailer park near Angelo's."

His dad supervised the job of filling them up in the winter, cutting hay in the summer for the straw that kept them insulated, repairing machinery, taking care of the horses and a multitude of duties.

This was the Knickerbocker operation, and there were others -- Swift, for one and some small competitive companies. "First one out had the edge," Pete declared, "and many a time my dad was out there at 2 a.m. in the morning."

The ice houses he described as about 200' x 400' in size, 50' in height. They had walls 1' thick that were insulated with sawdust. In them were "rooms," each about 75' in size. The cutting was done by men operating saws pulled by horses ("It was hazardous -- some men would slip under the ice and were never seen again") across the huge frozen ice ("The weather in the winter was much colder in that era -- we always cut from December through March 15th, and it would freeze again to the point where three cuttings a season were not unusual."). Many of the laborers were itinerant and would show up with straw hats. Then later they were noted wearing shawls around their heads and with newspapers tied around their shoes.

He mentioned John Ciesar of Whiting as being their main horse-shoer and a John Hays as their top cook.

Pete was born on the 5th Avenue in Roby and well recalls cutting hay from State Line to 129th Street. When the ice was cut, it did not all go into the ice houses, but sometimes 150 freight cars a day were loaded and shipped into Chicago for the packing houses up there.

Peculiarities of the wealthy, "Mr. Shedd owned all the land up to Roby and Mr. Forsythe beyond that." Shedd would take the street car out from Chicago and get off at State Line and walk over to the ice operation in order to save 5 cents by not having to pay for a transfer.

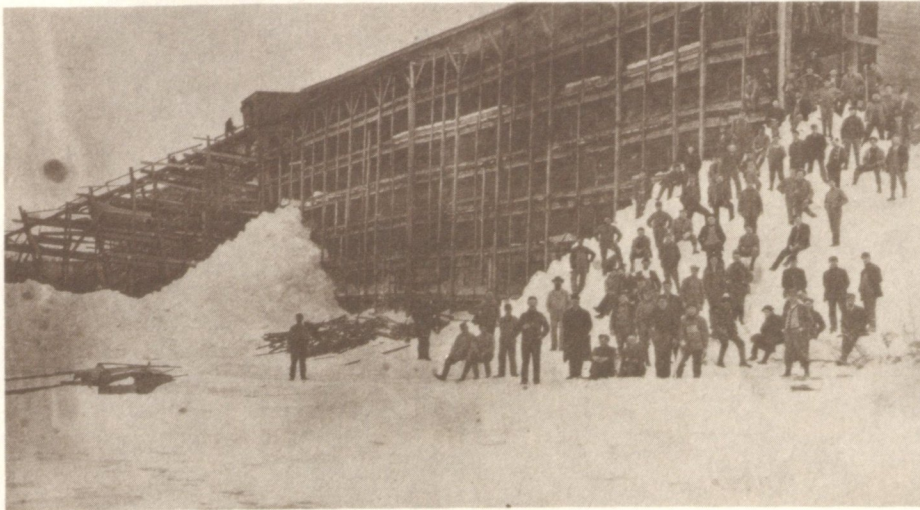
"And Forsythe had an obsession about his home town of Sheffield in England. He would not sell any land of his, which started at Roby and went east to Whiting, unless the businessman used the word "Sheffield" in his business. Our place of business was first called the "Sheffield Inn." He showed many early pictures and sure enough, there was the sign. "He wouldn't sell to us unless we had this name," Pete explained.

Pete decried the present day hullabaloo over the disappearing perch. "It's not due to lack of fish but to lack of fishermen," he declared. "I see plenty of fish in Lakes Erie and Michigan for the next 40 years -- all you care to eat." They now sell 135 to 140 tons of lake perch a year and 95% of it is caught in Lake Michigan. He also sells 70,000 lbs. of frog legs.

He said that Roby was annexed to Hammond before Robertsdale. "We used to live in Hammond, had a Roby post office and a Whiting address," he said.



Cutting ice



Knickerbocker Ice Co. (1904)



Ice Storage Building



WARREN A. REEDER

February 1977
By E. B. Hayward

Sunday, November 28th was a bright, cold day and, in the afternoon, Warren went over to take some pictures of the First Presbyterian Church which was being demolished to make way for a new church building to be erected on the same site. Thus, one of his last acts was the recording of an incident in the changing scene which he would no doubt have described and interpreted in this Newsletter and in other ways. Later that afternoon he suffered a heart attack from which he never regained consciousness and died on November 30th.

It is hard to think of the Hammond Historical Society without Warren Reeder. Since a May evening in 1960 when he and John Wilhelm called together those of us who became its charter members, Warren had recruited new members, produced or stimulated publications, presented and arranged programs, researched and recorded local history, maintained its finances and edited its Newsletter. In this as well as many other facets of the life of our community, he created a legacy which will remain preeminent.





WARREN A. REEDER JR.

February 1978
F. Derril Reed

When my nephew, David Ervin, telephoned me to say that Warren had died, my first thought was who would do all the tasks that Warren took upon himself for the Hammond Historical Society.

Living down in Indianapolis, my only contact with the Society now is through the newsletter. When there wasn't any January 1977 issue, then I was concerned about the future of the Society. But sometime later the February issue arrived, the officers and directors had met and were taking up their tasks, and Roger Reeder was the new treasurer and Ed Hayward had agreed to edit the newsletter.

I had known Warren Reeder quite well since the middle of the 1930's. Warren started out as a real estate salesman in my brother-in-law's real estate office. He and I made a lot of real estate appraisals together in the 1940's. We were both very active in church work although not in the same denomination. I also belonged to the Real Estate Board for some years, Warren and I would see each other frequently and so we had a lot of things in common to talk about.

I recall an old adage which goes something like this, "If you want a job done, give it to a busy man." And Warren was surely a busy fellow. He had a very successful real estate operation. In addition to writing our newsletter, he also wrote the newsletter for the Calumet Board of Realtors. Warren was active in the Historical Society of the State and was active in the Civil War Round Table. He was a real dyed-in-the-wool Civil War buff. If our president would be absent at a meeting, Warren would preside for him. I recall that Warren gave his famous talk on The Children of Abraham Lincoln at one of our annual meetings when the scheduled speaker was involved in an automobile accident. And I think all of us will remember the Lincoln skit he put on TV Channel 50. Warren wasn't just a "joiner" and he did more than lend his name to all of these causes. He was a "doer."

If he became identified with an organization he threw himself into the work.

I came up to Hammond on some business for a week last year and stopped in to see Warren about 60 days before he died. I had told him a couple of years ago that if he could give his time to edit our newsletter I would surely try to furnish some copy every month.

Warren and I talked about some things on which he was going to write. You were right, Ed Hayward, he was going to write on the First Presbyterian Church. He was also going to write on the Banks of the 1920's. We discussed this for some time. One other thing Warren planned to do; he said to me, "You know, Derril, I think every member of the Society has at least one story to tell the membership, and somehow I am going to get them to tell it."

Warren was a reporter at heart. He always had an ear open for a story. You never knew when he would publish something you said. Some years after I quit the real estate I was Warren's guest at a real estate board luncheon. Warren, "Doc" Wilson, myself, and some others were sitting around the table reminiscing about some of the old timers in the business including Roscoe Hemstock, Jay Trescott and Arthur Weiss. The next week the Board of Realtors newsletter had our conversation on page one. When the death of some person who had lived in Hammond a long time was reported in The Times, Warren would always lament the fact that he had never gotten around to talk to the man. Warren always felt that everyone had a story to tell.

Warren Reeder has been gone from our midst for about a year. He was a good friend and we lost him much too soon.



THE DAY PETE AUSTGEN CAME TO VISIT

April 1977
By F. Derril Reed

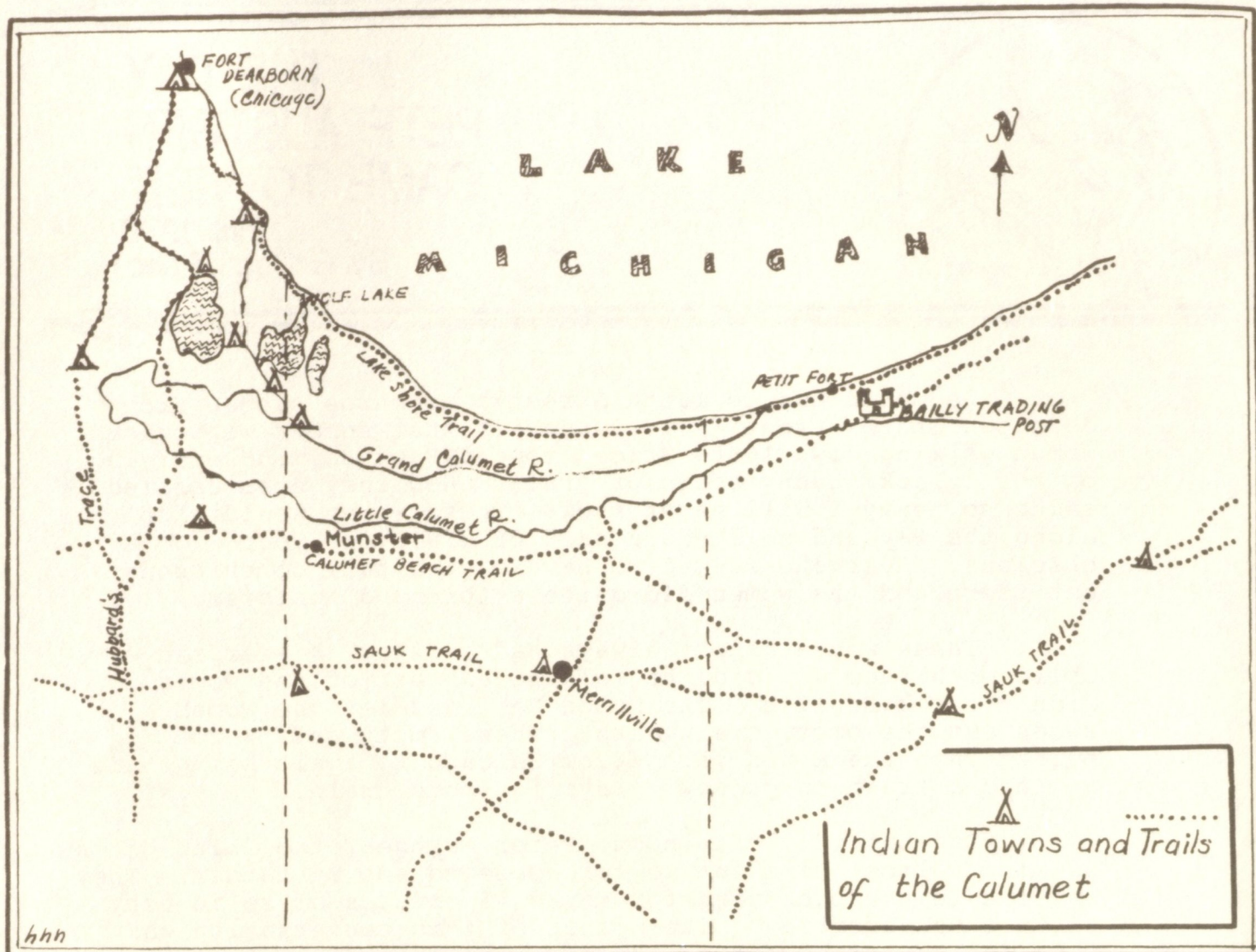
We moved out to 165th Street and Monroe Avenue from downtown State Street in 1912 and all that summer we noticed women walking down 165th Street toward East Hammond carrying on their backs gunny sacks of grain. How they ever carried sacks so heavy I will never know. These women would stop along the way and sell you a sack of grain for your chickens. Everyone seemed to have a yard full of chickens out there and the women did quite a thriving business.

These women almost always had a 12 or 14 year old child with them who did the talking as most of the women didn't speak English. The Monon Railroad let the women sweep out the empty grain cars. These empty cars were pulled into the Monon yards from Chicago to await being made up into a train to go down state for more grain.

One Saturday afternoon, Peter Austgen, the Chief of the Hammond Police, came out to our house to see my father. They sat out in the back yard for maybe 45 minutes or so in very serious conversation. The upshot of this conversation was that father agreed not to buy any more grain from the women.

It seems that these women, when sweeping out the empty cars (each car was good for a few bushels of grain) noticed that there were full cars of grain waiting on adjoining sidings to be hauled into Chicago. So they started tapping the full cars. Chop a hole in the wood side of a car near the floor and out would pour a golden stream of grain. They filled sack after sack and stashed them in the weeds away from the railroad. Then they would spend the afternoon carrying the sacks away.

So--what happened? Either one of the women didn't plug up one of the holes tight enough or the railroad jostled the cars when switching, the plug fell out and about half of a car of grain ran out on the ground. The police inspected the car and decided the holes were man-made (or in this case, woman-made) and the railroad declared there would be no more sweeping of cars, even empty ones.





MARCH OF THE INDIANS

May 1977
By F. Derril Reed

The most famous Indian trail in the Calumet is the present route of Dunes Highway. One of the pioneer women of the area, Sister Mary Joseph, was a guest at the Bailey Homestead when thousands of Indians on the march to one of their historic encampments passed by in silent review. Of this stirring scene she wrote:

"There was the Indian trail, a deep, wide rut, made by centuries of pacing feet, which the traveling Indians never forsook for the white man's roads, but always used in their comings and goings.

"The warriors of a tribe in full force, in stately single file procession, always made a showing pageant, but the most brilliant array of savage glory ever witnessed here or perhaps anywhere, was on an occasion when all Wisconsin and Minnesota Indians passed by arrayed for battle, on the way to a general encampment near Detroit.

"First came the Menominees, then the Winnebagoes, and then the Foxes, divided into bands according to their totems and attired in all their bravery.

"The single file passed on in perfect silence and unbroken order, not looking either to the right or to the left; one uniform steady stride not varying an inch from one another.

"This part of the procession the family viewed from the verandah without the slightest fear; but, when the servants whispered to Joseph Bailey, 'These are the last band of Foxes; the Decotahs are next,' the ladies stepped quietly into the house where the shutters already were closed and bolted, the window shades of threaded rushes in the second story lowered.

"For the Decotahs, as Sauks were called by other

Indians, were tribes which had no respect for women.

"In this way, they differed from the eastern Indian who might murder women, but never wrong them.

"The Decotahs, however, formed the grandest part of the pageant; their paint was more brilliant, their war bonnets more expansive, and their display of arms more unique.

"Feminine curiosity peered through the crevices in the window shades at the fine stalwart figures, tall, lithe, athletic warriors of most commanding appearance. Each Warrior's elegant blanket hung from the shoulder, bows and arrows hung at their backs, while right arms balanced rifles slung over the shoulder."



FULL CIRCLE

September 1977
By Walter J. Sommers

Once an open field, now a cleared lot -- nothing is there now. But memories remain, memories of a site occupied by some of the more important and distinctive businesses of the Calumet area. Our story begins over a half a century ago, with a famous builder and his son.

John H. McClay was a prominent contractor in the Calumet Region in the early decades of this century. This resident of the southwestern corner of Mason and State Line Streets supervised construction of Liberty Hall on Hohman Avenue (1918), built Washington High School in East Chicago (1918-1919), and reputedly also constructed the Atlantic City Boardwalk.

Early in the 1920's, he decided to establish his young son, Ralph, in business. He obtained for him a new car agency and constructed a building to house it. The building was situated on the west side of State Line at Sibley. It had a frontage of 100 feet along State Line. At the northeastern corner of the building was a door ten feet wide opening into the garage. Farther south along the eastern front was the sales room, which could display approximately three cars.

Auto agencies were nothing new in the Calumet Region. The growing popularity of cars in the years after World War I caused agencies to spring up like wild flowers throughout the area. However, Ralph McClay's agency was different. It offered something extra; a commercial car wash, perhaps the first in the Calumet Region. The wash was entered through another door, also ten feet wide, at the southeastern corner of the building. Just beyond the door, along the entire south wall, was the wash itself. It was a simple affair, not at all like the complex modern battery of buffers, brushes, and sprays. About the only similarity, in fact, was the chain hook-up and power train used to pull the cars westward through the wash. Along this power train was a

small trough for draining used water. That water itself came from over head. On either side of the pullway was a water pipe, about thirty feet long and six feet above the floor. Attached to each pipe were three hoses with nozzles. These hoses WERE the car wash. In that day of open-topped roadsters and touring cars (fore-runners of the convertible), washing had to be done manually. With their six hoses, some hand brushes, and a tub of soft soap, the washermen would work wonders.

Once a car passed through their wash area along the south wall, it was rotated ninety degrees by a turntable at the southwestern corner. Then it headed north along the west wall and exited through a rear door at the northwestern corner. Whether any effort was made to dry each car I do not know. What I do know is that business was good. On one day alone, 247 autos passed through the car wash.

Ralph McClay's interests, however, lay elsewhere. Increasingly during that decade, he became absorbed in nightclubs on Chicago's South Side. The more attention he paid to them, the less he gave to his agency. Around the end of the decade, his auto dealership and car wash went out of business.

The building lay vacant for several years. Then came 1933 and the repeal of Prohibition. As many people rushed into the beer and liquor trade, they sought any available structure to house their business. The old McClay building looked promising to Ed Leisenfelt of Calumet City, and there he opened the Horseshoe Bar. This three-sided bar for sixteen patrons occupied the old showroom.

He had other ideas for the garage and car wash areas. The dance marathon craze had hit him -- and many others -- so he converted the garage to a dance hall. He brought in a phonograph and built on the concrete floor a square platform for dancing, twenty-four feet on each side. A little, two-room cubicle over the bar served as, among other things, a rest area for the contestants. Soon the hall was filled with marathon dancers, all sizes and ages.

The dance hall proved popular with contestants but not with the health department. Discovery that about half the dancers were afflicted with a highly communicable disease caused the department to shut down the hall after only about three months. With the closing of the dance area, the tavern too went out of business.

Again the building remained unoccupied for several years. In 1935, Wesley Gault of Forest Dale Park reopened it as Community Liquors, a package liquor store. The old salesroom-bar now served as the store proper. The front part of the garage, in turn, became a storage area. The rear of the garage, based on the northwestern door, however, was almost immediately partitioned off from Community Liquors. It was rented as a warehouse and truck garage to Calumet Beverages, a beer and liquor distributorship owned by Clifford Baer of Calumet City. For twenty years, the warehouse remained there, but in 1955 it moved out. Community Liquors wanted the entire northern and western portions of the building as a drive-in parking area for its own store. Cars now entered through the northeastern door and departed through the northwestern door. The old southeastern door, though, remained unused since the closing of the car wash years before.

Community Liquors stayed in business until the early 1970's. Then it was sold, and the 50-year old building was torn down. Jim Citta, an employee of Wesley Gault for 35 years, stated they found two smock-like coats in the building with "Pontiac" lettered on the back. Could this have been the agency? The lot had come full circle. Originally developed for use by cars, it was now cleared for the same purpose. It is currently used as a parking lot by patrons of Angelo's Restaurant.



Sawyer Branch Library.



NEIGHBORHOOD

October 1977
By Edward B. Hayward

In the fall of 1955, when our family, Ed and Ruth and sons, Jim, John and Dana, moved into 6708 Madison Avenue, we were welcomed by Jimmie Vaughn, a little boy from across the street. The former owners had commissioned George Noonan, next door at 6706, to sell the house and it had been vacant for some time because, Jimmie said, Mr. Noonan hadn't wanted to sell to a family with kids. Jim and Eileen Mulligan and daughter, Kathy, lived on our other side at 6712. Next were the "Grandpa" Vaughns (Kenneth and Jennie), son, Kirby and granddaughter, Kay. The corner was occupied by the Sawyer Branch Library. Alice Fuzy was the librarian. Across the alley in back of the library lived Howard and Betty Bracken, sons Eddie, Tom, Bobbie; daughters, Kay and Linda. George and Virginia Stanchik lived across the alley from us at 638 Locust Street.

Mrs. Anna MacDonald lived alone at 6705 Madison. She was an elderly lady in poor health. In summer she blamed the violent weather on "those atom bombs" and would come to our house to wait out thunder storms. The home of James and Claire Vaughn, son, Jimmie, and daughter, Pam, came next. Vernon and Jean Skogan with son, Wesley, and daughter, Linda, lived at 6709. Mr. Arthur Shoup, at 6713, was retired and spent much time with relatives in Wisconsin. Seymour and Irene Silverman at 6715 operated a dry cleaning shop on Calumet Avenue. They had two children, Ronald and Laurie.

Dale and Martha Shumacher at 6719, had four lively boys, Dave, Tom, Wayne and Kenny, all active in school and church, scouting and sports. One night we were awakened by the throb of heavy engines and flashing lights. There were fire trucks and police cars all around Schumacher's house. A false alarm had been turned in. "Nothing seems to be wrong here" was the report. "All we've found so far is a small, red-haired boy and a big friendly dog."

Living at 6723 Madison were Dean and Helen Lawther whose children were Danny and Ann.

A real fire occurred one winter night in the attic of the house next door and the family was sheltered until it was safe to return. On a hot summer night, we looked out our bedroom window to see white wraiths flitting about in the street. Kay Vaughn and her girlfriends, all in night gowns, were having a slumber party and had come out to cool off. One evening there was screaming at the corner of Locust and Madison. A young man was outside a car beating up a girl and shouting, "Give me those keys." Within minutes the neighbors had surrounded the couple and stopped the beating. Someone called the police. "Just what is your relationship with this young woman?" the policeman asked. Whatever the problem was, the neighbors had not hesitated to become involved and no one was badly hurt.

We watched one another's houses during vacations, loaned and borrowed household goods from each other occasionally; the boys shoveled our walks and mowed out lawns. Our cat, Friskey, lived seventeen years. Virginia Stanchik looked after him while we were on vacations. He stayed in the back yard and garage and she fed him there. The first year we were gone three weeks and he disappeared the first night. Virginia sadly reported his loss and we returned. About three o'clock the next morning we heard a commotion at our bedroom window and a very excited cat was let in. He must have stayed with someone outside the neighborhood and come back each night to see if we were home. After that, he never wandered far.

This describes the little group of families and houses that seemed to us to make up our neighborhood. The children played together and, as time passed, attended Edison School together, went swimming at Edison Pool and attended Hammond High School. The boys joined the same boy scout troop and the dads were on the troop committee and took them hiking and camping. For a while the women had occasional morning coffee klatches in each other's kitchens. At Christmas time cookies and other home made goodies were exchanged. When Mrs. Noonan and Mrs. MacDonald died, these are the families who contributed flowers together.

This neighborhood no longer exists for us. Perhaps it is because it takes children to keep us neighborly, and ours have grown up. Perhaps a new neighborhood is here, but we are no longer aware of it. We are the only family of

those named still living in the 6700 block of Madison Avenue. Some say that neighborhoods go through life cycles; and it is true that several young couples with babies and young children have recently moved into some of these houses.

We have also heard it claimed that apathy and fear have supplanted neighborliness in our cities. That few know the people who live on their block or would care to risk becoming involved with them in even a casual way. We would be happy to have your comments or to include descriptions by our readers of other Hammond neighborhoods, past or present, in future newsletters.



The Edward B. Hayward Home



REMEMBRANCES OF THE LIBRARY OF THE 20'S AND 30'S

March 1978

By Edward B. Hayward

Fern Arnold, whose tenure at the Hammond Public Library spans half a century, is retiring at the end of this month, and we spent some time recently talking with her about her early days with the library.

Her earliest library memory is of her first trip to the Old Main Library in Central Park with her brother. The shortest route from her home on Oak Street took them across the open tied railroad bridge over the Little Calumet River, a terrifying experience for a little girl. At that time small children were definitely on probation in the library and Mrs. Easter, the librarian, sternly admonished Fern's brother, "She'll have to be quiet."

"I hadn't said a word," Fern told us.

Features of the old library she remembers from childhood are the circular staircase to the basement, the fireplaces, the glass floors in the stacks, and the grandfather clock which is now in the Calumet Room.

Not many visits were made to the Main Library because the first branch building, Keeler Branch, was built in Fern's neighborhood and she spent many happy hours there. Jobs were scarce for girls in those days and Fern envied her brother his paper route and other odd jobs. She was glad to be chosen by Mrs. Opp, Keeler Librarian, to work evenings and Saturdays as a page during her high school years.

Mrs. Winnie Opp was a widow who had formerly been a school teacher in Illinois. She lived in North Hammond with her son, Oren, who was a schoolmate of Fern's. Mr. Albert Nichols was the Chief Librarian. Fern remembers his infrequent visits to Keeler Branch. "He always carried a black umbrella and, of course, always wore a dark suit, starched collar and a hat."

In the summer of 1929, after Fern's junior year at Hammond High School, she began to work at Main Library as well as Keeler. Mr. James Howard had recently been appointed Chief Librarian and he had somehow found a windfall of about \$18,000, a large sum in those days, to add to the year's budget. Fern worked in the Catalog Department with Mary Ruch and Loraine Thomas as a general assistant to Florence Allman, checking bibliographic information, typing cards, pasting book pockets and doing other work in connection with the large influx of new books. She remembers that Mr. Howard spent many hours throughout the summer at the card catalog with Frank Rosengren, a Chicago book dealer, selecting books from his stock list.

In the Fall, Elma Tomkins, Mr. Howard's secretary, resigned to have a baby and Fern was asked to take her place even though she had a year of high school to complete. She attended classes, reported for her secretarial duties at 2:00 p.m., continued to work at Keeler some evenings and then went home to do her homework, until her parents made her give up the work at Keeler.

In June of 1930, Fern became full-time secretary to the Chief Librarian. These were depression times and Fern recalls that the relatively small staff was a closely knit group. The library was very busy because most people had so much more time than work or money. The staff worked long hours and provided their own entertainment outside of working hours. At least three staff parties were held each year, -- a breakfast cook-out at Green Lake or Thornton Woods, a picnic at the Dunes, and a Christmas party at the Howard home or the home of a senior staff member.

Certification for public librarians was started and Fern met the requirements based on reading and experience. she attended Indiana University Extension courses at Roosevelt High School and Hammond High School, ultimately obtaining a degree from Northwestern University.



The Hammond Public Library



SVOBODA'S NICKLEODEON

June 1978
By F. Derril Reed

The last time Warren Reeder and I had lunch together was a couple of months before I moved to Indianapolis. As neither of us had seen Svoboda's new museum, we went over there for lunch.

We introduced ourselves to the senior Mr. Svoboda and he, in turn, introduced us to his son who was busy in the kitchen. Warren and I were eating roast beef sandwiches and drinking coffee when Mr. Svoboda finished some task he was doing and came over and sat at our table.

Svoboda told us of the former museum in Chicago Heights and how they continued to acquire exhibits until they were overflowing the old buildings. Warren took notes as Svoboda talked, but I don't remember Warren ever writing about this. Probably other things came up that he felt were more urgent.

The new museum is a fine brick and concrete building. It is located about one mile west of Dyer on the south side of U.S. 30 at Route 83. There is a massive mahogany bar and a beautiful back bar. These were originally at the World's Fair in Chicago. The main floor houses dozens of old coin operated music machines.

There are a few big band organs eight and ten feet high. These are imports having been built in Belgium and Holland. There are the "ice cream parlor" variety of coin operated player pianos complete with drums and traps. And then there are many unusual automatic musical machines. For instance, there is one that has two violins behind the glass case where the violins are bowed and fingered mechanically. One band organ had run wild when the roll of perforated paper had broken. The case was completely filled with loops of the paper roll as it continued to unwind.

A comfortable stairway leads to a florescent lighted basement room which houses coin operated amusement devices. Around the walls are many coin operated record players built by Seeburg and Wurlitzer, which are commonly known as Juke boxes.

When you are out someday, pay Svoboda's a visit and have lunch or dinner there.



National Scout Jamboree, July, 1953.



BOY SCOUT TROOPS OF HAMMOND

November 1978
By John Phillips

I entered scouting in September, 1918, and as I remember, Mr. Gordon, father of Dale and Vern Gordon, was scoutmaster. Troop 2 I do not remember. Troop 3 was my troop for thirteen years as an assistant scoutmaster and as a scoutmaster; when I joined Troop 3, we did not have a scoutmaster, so, although I was 18 years old, I served as scoutmaster and we carried Elmer Tangerman's uncle, Ed Carston, as scoutmaster on the records. When I left Troop 3 in 1937, a John Muri (?), an accomplished pianist around town, took over the troop. Troop 4 met in one of the churches and I think Les DeCamp was connected with that troop. Marion Gruen Evans writes she sees Les in church so you might see him on Troop 4's history. Troop 5: in the winter of 1918, I was member of this troop at the Brooks House, located on Conkey Avenue. A Mr. Spears started this troop, but after the basketball season ended, the troop broke up and I transferred to Troop 17 at the Wallace School. This was in 1920. Mr. Collet, (Lyle Collet's dad) was scoutmaster of 17.

In about 1922, Troop 5 was reorganized and J. K. Scott asked me to help Mr. Dan Barret with it. They met in the Maywood School gym. About six months later, I transferred to Troop 3 where I was active for 13 years. Troop 6 is where I passed my tenderfoot test to Scout Master Carl Douglas. This was in September of 1918. World War One ended two months later. After the war, Carl's brother, "Ted," who was in the war's navy, became our assistant scoutmaster, and Troop 6 passed the best troop personal inspections, and troop skill team in the area at that time. After Carl Douglas, about the mid-20's "Bill" Kronsell became Troop 6 scoutmaster. He was active in scouting when I left Hammond in 1950.

Troop 8: I think that was the Saint Joseph's Church troop of Hohman Street and John Scherer was it's

scoutmaster. Howard Welsand (his sister worked in the Hoosier bank) was his assistant scoutmaster. John Scherer had two sons in scouting, Paul Scherer who was in the insurance business and his brother, John, who worked in the personnel department of Lever Brother's Company.

Troop 9: I remember Jerry Finn, it seems to me Henry Kiehl was connected with Troop 9. Presbyterian Church? If he is still around Hammond, you might contact him. George Evans, Marion's husband, had a troop at the Columbia School. I think it was Troop 14.

There were some troops in Calumet City. Ben Farney was a scoutmaster of one of them. Ben's sister-in-law, who is Mildred Menne Splant, worked in the Scout office for Mr. Scott and may still be working there. If you could contact her, she could give you much of Hammond's Scouting history from the late 20's through the present time. This is as far as I can inform you and hope I have been of some help.



First Boy Scout Troop of Lake County.
Organized in 1st Baptist Church, Hammond (1910)



THE DUCHY OF GLENDALE PARK

June 1979
By Jerome F. Kutak

While it may seem rather romantic to give such a title to a talk about twelve acres of real estate in Hammond, accurately identified as Glendale Addition, it appealed to me as fairly descriptive of a unique residential area. It is that area which is bounded on the East by Hohman Avenue, and on the West by State Line Street, in Hammond, with Forestdale Park on the west, in Calumet City, Illinois. On the North is a 14 foot alley, adjoining the property facing Detroit Street. On the south is a 16 foot alley, adjoining the property which faces Wildwood Road. That alley has been squeezed to about half that size, as my neighbor on the South has extended his lot by planting trees to about the middle. With bushes and overhanging trees, the alley is barely perceptible from State Line Street, although there is a sign indicated it is a one way street, going westward.

On the Hohman Avenue side, it is somewhat wider, as the owner of the property there built an apartment house, with the entrance facing the alley, but it is almost blocked because the apartment residents park their cars there. When that apartment was built, someone put a sign in the alley, labeling it as West Conkey, as that is where Conkey ends from the East, but I guess the city took it down, as there is no such place as "West Conkey."

There is now only one entrance to this area, which also serves as an exit, to an oval shaped drive, 30 feet wide, extending westward from Hohman Avenue, around a wooded area which is technically Glendale Park. The park alone is about 200 by 554 feet, with seven houses and a small condominium facing the park, on the North side; and eight houses, facing the park, on the South side. The North side places are house numbered from West to East, 17 to 63. The South side places are house numbered from West to East, 18 to 64.

Except for the lots on the extreme East and West, the lots measure 75 X 150 feet. The two end ones on the East are 125 X 150 feet; while the two end ones on the West are 194 X 276 feet. The circular street is technically called Glendale Boulevard, and originally exited on the West side, to State Line. Being only twenty feet wide, and shortened by the overhanging bushes and trees, it appears much narrower, so was the scene of frequent accidents. So in November, 1941, by court order, this 190 foot stretch was legally vacated, and reverted to the adjoining owners, who use it jointly as a circular drive to their respective residences.

When all of the residents of Glendale Park signed a petition to vacate this area in 1941, most of them were either the original owners, or their descendants. It is this singular continuity of ownership, as well as the prominence of so many of them, which made me think of it as a "Duchy."

Another interesting thing about this area is that the central part, Glendale Park, does not belong to the city, but is owned by the residents as joint tenants, with no right to build on it, but with a duty to maintain it, such as cutting the grass, and caring for the trees and bushes.

These chores for many years were performed by the city, but when rumors began to circulate that it was going beyond that, and planned to build some community facilities, such as a tennis court and swimming pool, the Dukes and Duchesses arose in arms. The net result was that the city just quit granting those special privileges. So that now we have to cut the grass in front of our lot. This grass cutting is not well synchronized, so at times the parkway grass has a patchwork effect. Otherwise the street is well paved, and the snow regularly plowed. Of course, our taxes are rather high averaging about a thousand dollars a lot, from a low of about \$650, to a high of about \$2,400.

Except for the interior remodeling, few changes are apparent. In the seventy years since the first house was built, only the apartment house on the east side, and the Warren Reeder house have been added. Only two have had any substantial changes on the outside, the present Mazur house, and the one next to mine, but owned by me, the former Bomberger residence. The Reeder home is especially attractive, resembling the Thomas Jefferson home in Virginia, "Monticello." I tried to capture the Colonial

effect in the house adjoining Reeder's and mine, now occupied by my daughter, Anne.

Up to 1961, there was a pretty general understanding among all the residents, that irrespective of city zoning, we had complete control over our destinies, and were subject to a "covenant running with the land," or a contract entered into by all of the residents, which bound all the owners, and those who would purchase from them. This occurred in 1908, and provided, among other things, that the use of every lot was limited to one dwelling house "with stables and other outbuildings usually incident to and reasonably proper for the enjoyment of said premises as a dwelling." In short, no office or commercial enterprises, shall ever be manufactured, sold, or otherwise disposed of within the limits thereof."

As late as 1957, there were rumors that certain interests had their eyes on the one vacant lot, located on the Hohman side, just North of the entrance to the park. So many of the residents thought it would be a good idea to "protect" ourselves by each contributing a portion of the purchase price, and adding the lot to the central area, to be owned in common. I negotiated with owner, Mr. W. Welter, and received an offer to sell, for \$9,500. This was in June 1958, and would have meant an assessment of \$561.78. But there were some violent dissenters. It was tragic mistake: anyone of the residents could have bought the lot and kept it as a personal investment, and prevented litigation.

In any event, the lot was bought by Julius Sachs, a Hammond lawyer, who believed the covenant had no standing in court. Our protest before the Board of Zone Appeals was overruled, so we joined to fight the case in court. Mr. Kelly Molton, who owned the adjoining lot, let his name be used as a plaintiff, to get an injunction, but for reasons I don't care to discuss, we lost, and the apartment house was built. Later, it became a condominium.

According to Charley Bomberger, who lived with his folks at 22 Glendale Park, the first two houses on the Park were those on Lot No. 17, built by Mr. Belman, formerly Hammond superintendent of Schools; and the second on Lot No. 38, on which the early Beckmans lived. The first is now occupied by the Owen Crumpacker family, and the second by the Bob Gilbert family. The third is probably the one next to mine, at 22 Glendale, built by Mr. Bomberger around 1908. Mine followed, in 1912.

The entire Glendale subdivision came into being in 1905 as the result of a corporation being formed by three men, Gostlin, Meyn and Turner. Streets were named after them (Gostlin). Real estate, banks and traction companies were formed and owned by them. Mr. Turner controlled the street car company, which operated a trolley on Hohman, which started near Conkey on the South side, went north, to the downtown area, as far as State Street, turned west to Anne, south to Sibley and eastward to Hohman, to go back South to Conkey. He even built a brick shelter at the east end of the Park, for the convenience of the neighborhood.

Naturally, he reserved one of the two largest lots for himself. He engaged an architect from the East, to build for him, a truly Colonial styled home. With 10,000 square feet of space with twenty rooms, high ceilings, huge entrance hallway, with a winding staircase. Fireplace in the living room, dining room and bedroom. Living room, 20 X 30 feet. Tapestry on the walls. Gas fired ironer. Opening in the walls for the attachment of a vacuum system. Many leaded windows, and front entrance doorway modeled after those on Beacon Street, Boston. He lived there until he died in 1938, leaving it to his daughter, Rose, who married Fred Crumpacker, brother of Owen, now next door. When she divorced Fred, she felt it too large to take care of, and sold it to me, in 1944.

Starting with my house, on going eastward, with house numbers 18 to 64, and then going westward, from 63 to 17:

18. I have already mentioned my house. I might add, that there is a brick garage in the rear, which Murray Turner used as a stable, and can hold four cars. When I moved in, there was a chute from the attic to a stall for feed, and one could still smell the presence of horses. There is an elevator from the basement to the third floor in the main building, very useful.
22. This house built by L. L. Bomberger, was originally about half its present size, but enlarged as his family grew. He was not only a famous lawyer, but a great gardener. Raised his own vegetables, and never threw away any garbage. He had quite a compost pile in the rear. Now occupied by my daughter, Anne. After L. L. died in 1958, a Hammond lawyer by the name of Gemberling bought it, and then sold it to a man named Johnson. I bought it in 1967.

30. This house is built on two lots, one which was owned by one of Bomberger's partners, Morthland, and one by Mrs. Emmerling, Paddack's mother-in-law. It is truly a beautiful house, and Warren, being a historian, no doubt had in mind Jefferson's home in Virginia. After he died, and Roger got married, Mrs. Reeder has lived there alone with her daughter.
38. This house is now owned by Joe VanBokkelen, a fine young lawyer, former Asst. District Atty. He bought it from John Beckman, Jr., who had lived in it after his father, John Beckman, Sr., died. I notice that Joe is doing a lot of interior remodeling.
44. Jerry Mazur is one of Hammond's councilmen. It has probably changed ownership more frequently than any other house in Glendale Park. One of the early owners, if not the builder, was Applegate in the 20's. Considerable remodeling, inside and out, by Mr. Frankenfield. He was the one who changed the front, to install the front pillars, from the ground floor to second floor ceiling. When he died, his widow sold to Pellachouds, who kept a monkey in the front yard. They sold to the Cleavangers, who sold to the Pfisters, who sold it to Ronald Carter, Principal of Hammond Tech. High School.
50. Now owned by Jerry Smith, a well known Hammond lawyer. My record starts with the Tangermans, who sold to the Art Kuipers, of local banking fame.
60. Now owned by the Jerry Twomeys. They bought from Dr. Hedwig Kuhn, after her husband, Hugh, died. The Kuhns were the founders of the Kuhn Clinic, which later moved and became the Hammond Clinic.
64. Owned by Dean and Doris Mitchell. He is long time President and Chief operating officer of Nipsco. They have the distinction of being the longest in years of residence in Glendale Park. Always so nicely decorated with lights at Christmas time.

ON THE NORTH SIDE

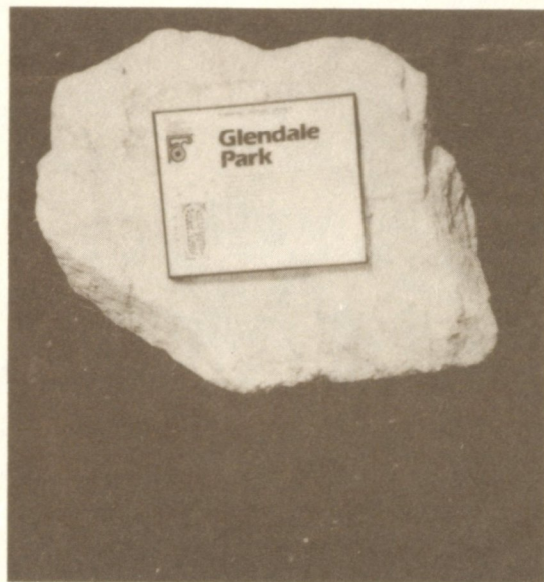
63. The condominium. Owned by Sachs, and the Wadas family and the Pachters. I've said enough about that affair, but now we are quite used to it. Time marches on.

57. Now owned by the Robert Gilberts. Probably the oldest in the Park. Not too much changing of hands. First the Beckman family, followed by the Morans, who are related. Then the Motons, and now the Gilberts.
51. Here we have the Donald Swibes, who bought from the Sam Ennis's. A prominent realtor, Ennis came in about 1944, and sold out in 1970.
45. Now owned by the Richard Doolins, who bought out the Hilary Raabs in 1970. The Raabs built the first swimming pool in the area. They succeeded the Harold Woelfelds, who did a lot of interior remodeling.
41. This house, now owned by Kirk Pinkerton, son of the local judge. Bought from the Vernon Holzhalls, V.P. of a local bank. He bought from the Dr. Howards, prominent doctor, who bought from the Fred Crumpackers. Fred, Senior, was undoubtedly the leading trial lawyer in Indiana, coming from a long line of distinguished lawyers, judges, and lawmakers. He died in 1948.
33. This beautiful mansion, in an authentic English country style, is now owned by the Jerry Busters, owners and operators of the famed Cottage Restaurant. It was built by William Wilke, I. He was founder and long time chief executive of Hammond Lead Co. The building is located on a lot and a half, sharing the half lot with the adjoining property owner on the west. After his death, his widow, and then his grandson were the owners.
21. This house is now owned by the Duane Dedelows, after being extensively renovated, on the inside. It was built by one of the founders of Glendale Park, Peter Meyn, who was the father of Mrs. Wm. Wilke, I. For a very long time it was owned by Bill Wilke II, the son of William I.
17. Now we come to the last of the lots, now owned by the Owen Crumpackers, whose father, Fred, Sr., has already been mentioned. In fact, Owen was born in No. 41, now the Pinkerton house. No. 17 is the so-called Belman House, who was one of the pioneers of the Park, presiding also as the town's Superintendent of Schools. It is the only lot comparable in size to

mine. One of the early owners was Dr. Robert Gillis, a leading Hammond dentist. I cannot say if he was the second owner, but he could have been. As a hobby, he engaged in gardening, and maintained a beautiful lot, and was often seen digging around the flowers and bushes. On his retirement, he moved to Florida, selling the house to the Crumpackers.



Glendale Park markers





W. C. Belman House - Glendale Park.



William P. Wilke House - Glendale Park.



W. C. BELMAN

November 1979
By Edward B. Hayward

In the course of our research into the social and cultural aspect of Hammond's history, we have been intrigued by a person who seems to have been in at the creation of a surprising number of Hammond's most influential institutions. It is not unknown in recent times for a person to pursue careers in education, business and the arts, but it is rather unusual.

Our attention was first called to the long and varied career of William Charles Belman in Hammond affairs when a man who had been friendly with his son in college, wrote to inquire if the library had knowledge of his current address. An article in Dr. Howat's "Standard History of Lake County" includes a portrait of Mr. Belman, a handsome man with a neat van-dyke beard and moustache and sparkling eyes. He is wearing a pin striped suit, starched white collar, light tie and diamond stick-pin. This picture was probably taken in about 1915 when Mr. Belman was Cashier of the First National Bank of Hammond.

Mr. Belman was the son of William Fletcher Belman and Matilda Sabine Belman who lived in Detroit, Michigan, when he was born on May 1, 1860. After elementary and high school in Detroit, he came to Indiana to attend Valparaiso College. After graduation, he was principal in the public school in Lowell for two years before coming to Hammond in 1883 to be the first Superintendent of Schools. At that time all classes in Hammond were conducted in the building known as Central School which was the third school building to be constructed in Hammond. He started the high school in 1884 as a three year institution and in 1887 the first three graduates, all girls, received their diplomas. It wasn't until 1894 that the high school became a four year institution. Mr. Belman also organized a kindergarten soon after he became Superintendent, one of the first in Indiana.

The "High School Beacon," newspaper of the Hammond

High School, for September 20, 1901, carries the announcement of Mr. Belman's resignation as Superintendent after eighteen years. During his tenure, the Hammond School system had grown from the one school with five teachers and about 200 students until there were six schools with fifty teachers and several thousand pupils. Mention is made of his high ideals, gentle manner and advocacy of the best methods of imparting knowledge.

Mr. Belman married Nettie E. Smith following college graduation and after her death, he married Emma L. Rork Belman who was the mother of his only child, Creighton Rork Belman. The Belman family first lived at 130 Ogden Street.

While still employed as Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Belman had been one of the organizers of the Lake County Savings and Trust Company and, in 1888, of the Hammond Building Loan and Savings Association. He served as president of the latter institution for 45 years.

When Mr. Belman resigned as Superintendent of Schools, he became Cashier of the First National Bank of Hammond. A. Murray Turner was president of this bank which was organized by Marcus M. Towle in 1886. In October of 1902, Peter W. Meyn organized the Lake County Trust and Savings Bank and Mr. Belman became cashier of this institution. In 1921, Mr. Belman became Vice President of the First Trust and Savings Bank and from 1928 until 1930, he was President of this bank.

During all these years, Mr. Belman's interests outside his principal employment were many and varied. We find his name frequently listed as a participant in the amateur theatrical performances at the Towle Opera House and in other plays and pageants given for charitable causes of the times.

For several years, he was Vice President and Treasurer of the Hammond Boy Scout Council. As a member of the camping committee, he designed the cabins and some other buildings at Camp Betz.

Mr. Belman was a member of the First Methodist Church of Hammond and of its official board for many years.

He belonged to the Masons. The story is told that he had thought for some time that a monument should be placed in the Masonic section of Elmwood Cemetery as a tribute to

departed members of the Masonic order and one night he arose from his bed and designed the monument. A short time later he had it constructed and installed at his own expense.

He also belonged to the Knights of Pythias, The Royal League and the National Union. He was prominent in the organization of the Hammond Chamber of Commerce.

In his article, "The Duchy of Glendale Park," Jerome Kutak lists Mr. Belman as "one of the pioneers of the Park." The house at 17 Glendale Park was constructed for the Belman's and they lived there for many years. After the death of his second wife, Mr. Belman married Sarah Starr, who had been employed in the Hammond School system.

The Minutes of the Alice Club of Hammond, forerunner of the Hammond Area YWCA, show Mr. & Mrs. Belman to have played an active part in this organization. In 1923, when Mrs. Belman was president, new enlarged quarters were secured on Russell Street.

"On the evening of November 20th, the Directors of the Alice Club, with their husbands, motored to the Eleanor Club of Chicago, located on the Midway.

"Mrs. Barth, the matron in charge, conducted the entire party on a tour of inspection through the building, visiting the reception rooms, dining rooms, kitchen (while operating for the evening meal), the dormitories and isolating rooms used for contagious illness. Mrs. Barth answered all questions asked in regard to any department of the building.

"The party then adjourned to Parker's Restaurant for dinner. As a complete surprise to the Directors, Mr. Belman assumed the duties as host, all of the twenty-three being his guests for the occasion.

'The Directors and their husbands present at the meeting which followed were Mesdames Belman, Beckman, Bomberger, Pierce, Louman, Emery, Gostlin, Woods, J. W. Smith, Dell Plain, and Miss Katherine Oberlin; Messrs. Belman, Beckman, Bomberger, Pierce, Wolf, Louman, Emery, Gostlin, Woods, J. W. Smith, Paxton, and Del Plain.

"Mr. Belman acted as chairman for a discussion regarding the advisability of carrying out the proposed plan for a new building."

During the Depression, it appears that the Belman's lived for a time at the Southmoor Apartment Hotel following the failure of the First Trust and Savings Bank of Hammond on February 2, 1931. None of Hammond's banks survived. By 1935, however, the Hammond City Directory shows them to be again living at 17 Glendale Park. Mr. Belman was Secretary-Treasurer of Elmwood Cemetery which he had established at an earlier date as well as President of the Hammond Buildings & Loan Association. He died at the age of 79 on October 12, 1939.



Supt. William C. Belman with
first Hammond High School graduating class (1887)



MY MOST UNFORGETTABLE STUDENT

February 1980
By Ruth Ewing

I don't need a thousand plus words to tell of one of my former pupils.

This particular young man always came up with a contribution to improve room climate. He was a good, thorough worker in academic areas and achieved good grades.

How well I remember the day that my ten-year-old fifth graders were discussing ways to improve conduct in the washrooms. Several members had made suggestions. One or two had indicated that I, the teacher, should appoint spies, monitors, or captains. (This system had never appealed to me, but I had not mentioned this fact to the class.) My first impulse was to protest, but I knew I must not as I wanted the full cooperation of the group. This very exceptional young man did the job for me. He had the courage to speak out frankly, regardless of how unreceptive his classmates might be. After he was recognized by the student chairman, he firmly declared, "I don't think we should make Miss Ewing do that at all. I think we should each one take care of 'ourselves!'" They all agreed. Happily, so did the teacher.

Later, we were choosing call letters for our "Make Believe" Radio Station. Each one presented his selection and added his reasons. Our young friend said "My choice is Station GCR because this is the Good Citizens' Room." Again the class made his choice--theirs.

That year Maywood School's Fifth Grade Class was photographed for the cover of our Hammond Times Sunday Magazine Supplement. This young man, with his winsome smile, was chosen by the photographer to center the picture.

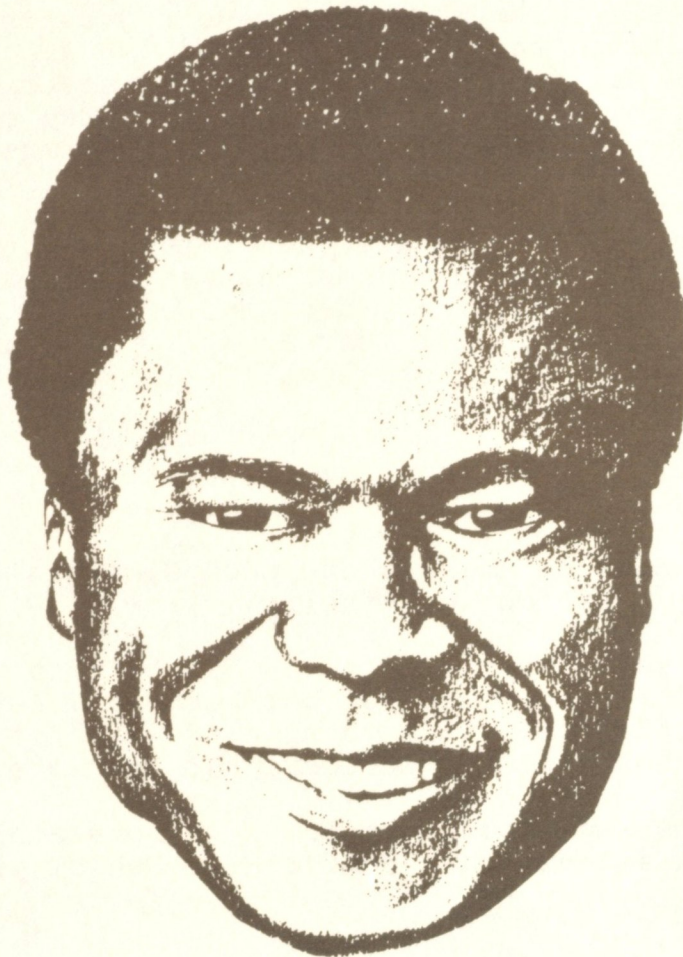
He distinguished himself in various athletics throughout his Junior and Senior High School years. At

Northwestern University he served as co-captain of the football team. I had the pleasure of seeing him in the College All Star Football game in Chicago Soldier's Field. Throughout his career, I've followed him with pride.

For this ten-year-old lad my affection was true, my admiration was sincere and my appreciation of his leadership was--and is--deep.

One has to guard against high praise of an individual pupil lest it alienate his peers. This, then, is the first time I have had the opportunity to speak directly of his fine qualities. In my opinion, he did not do or say anything just to gain favor with the teacher. He was a boy's boy! He lived at 1045 Ames Street, Hammond, Indiana.

Who is this man's man? He is Irvin Cross, currently co-captain and defensive line-backer on the Philadelphia Eagles Professional Football Team.



Irv Cross



MAKING BRICK IN MUNSTER

March 1980
By Walter J. Sommers

This article is closely related to an article I submitted early in 1979 to the Hammond Historical Society about getting sod and heavy black dirt from the area mentioned below to use in making lawns in Hammond.

In 1900 Bernard Weber owned five brick yards Northwest of Chicago. A friend was told he longed for a location in Indiana. A plat was found near the Maynard Station on the Pennsy Railroad. Soil soundings showed useable clay thirty inches below the surface to a depth of sixty-five feet and an area large enough to last one hundred years.

National Brick was born in 1905. The name changed to American Brick in 1966. His neighbors were to the west and north, truck farmers raising onions, tomatoes, cabbage, sugar beets and sweet corn.

At what is now 45th Street and Columbia lived a family named Dittrich. At the Southeast corner of Ridge and Calumet lived Nick Kirsch, the father of Vic of the Redtop Trucking empire. Nick also worked at National Brick. At Ridge and Columbia were the descendants of Ernest Stahlbaum. Directly across Calumet a saloon, name and owner unknown. South, across the MONON tracks, was the farm of Bill DeMik.

Six months after opening, authorities said they thought a trace element was in the clay. Not another spot in Indiana or Illinois is so blessed. It made the brick a pink salmon shade and the 2' x 4' x 8' straight as an arrow. It made a beautiful wall, and the ease in handling it made contractors clamor for it. In 1920, the Illinois Institute of Brickmaking said National Brick was the largest producer in the midwest.

Now, to the task of making it. A narrow gauge railroad brought the clay out of the pit to the shed. Today a HUGE truck of 20-30 tons does it. Some chunks weight 300-400 lbs. Two sets of knives cut and sliced the clay to a small size

to go to a PUG Mill, which grinds and pulverizes it. It travels to a shaper (I call it a sausage stuffer) and comes out 2' x 4' and is cut into eight inch lengths. It is loaded on small cars and goes into a dryer for forty-eight hours. A car train takes it ready to make to the kiln. There are eleven kilns each 120' long x 35' wide and 16' high. Each kiln contains 1,200,000 brick. An overhead crane lowers the green brick. In the bottom 30" of the kiln are inverted "V"s thirty inches wide and thirty inches high for the gas burners extending across the kiln. A slurry of clay and water is painted on the sides and ends of the kiln to retain heat. This is the only moisture used in the making of THE BRICK.

The burn is for seventy-two hours using four million cubic feet of gas with the temperature reaching 1600 degrees. Depending upon the outside temperature, three to five days are needed to cool it enough to be handled.

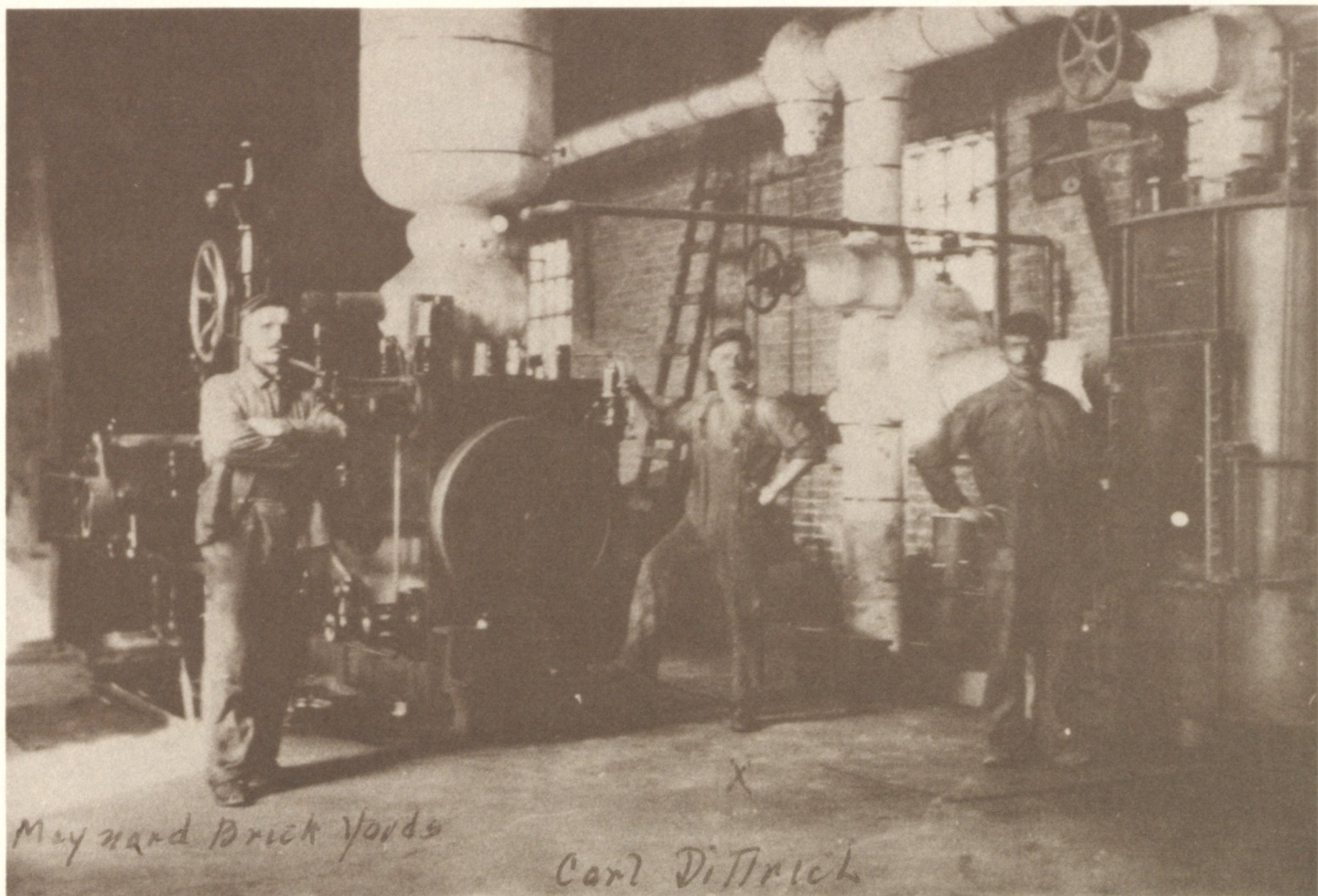
In 1920 many bricks were shipped by rail. The wheelbarrow used was two-six foot long handles, each with a six inch board atop. The wheel is set back eighteen inches from the front with twenty-four inch uprights on the front of the handle to hold the brick. Sixty bricks were loaded on each handle. It was very hard to balance. The men would trot with it.

In 1925 yours truly hauled brick to the Calumet National Building. I had to have the brick on the job by 7 a.m. so the laborers could have the brick on the scaffold by 8 a.m. for the bricklayer. I remember a young man complaining the brick was so hot he needed to water them before being able to touch. I learned two years ago this young man was Wesley Powley, earning his tuition for dental school. His first office was in the building he helped to build. His office is now on Ridge Road in Munster.

The volume of brick in 1978 was thirty-five million per year. In 1920 the price was F.O.B. \$9.00 per thousand. Contractors paid \$12.00 per thousand. Today the price is \$100.00 per thousand. 110 people are employed. Two years ago O.S.H.A. sent several men, spent several days fine-combing the plant and found nothing wrong. E.P.A. is constantly harassing them! How much do the bureaucracies add to the cost of the product? This third generation of Bernard Weber is active. How many know the lake at Lansing Sportsmans' Club is a clay hole, as is Green Lake across from River Oaks Shopping Center. Both hit springs and water rapidly rose. On a clear, windless day at Green Lake, one can look down fifty feet and see a steam shovel and cars that were unable to be salvaged.



Calumet National Bank



Maynard Brick Yard in Munster.



REMINISCENCES

May 1980
By Maurey Zlotnik

My dad came to Hammond from Europe before 1914. He bought a store on State Street called the Winer Store. It was right across from Minas and later on moved down to where the Lynch Office Supply is now. I remember the streets were so crowded with people. There were very few cars. If you wanted to see anyone, just go downtown on Saturday night. The stores were open from eight o'clock in the morning until nine at night.

We lived at 410 Highland Street. My dad had bought the building from Sam Schlesinger who in turn had bought it from Beckman who was in the building supply business. My dad and two others, for a time, leased the Bijou and Pastime Theatres. I remember that our water wasn't very good in Hammond. We would take our gallon and five gallon jugs and go over on Hohman and fill them with drinking water at one cent a gallon. We bought our groceries right across the street at Johnson's Grocery. All the people in the south end of town would put everything on the book. Until the Depression, we were a very good account. Of course, after that, things slowed down for everybody.

Our transportation at that time was the Green Line. It started on Columbia at Conkey Street and went all the way to Hohman, north on Hohman to State Street and over to East Chicago. Also there was a line going north and turned over on Sheffield at the car barns and then north on Sheffield to where Lever Brothers is now and there was the Boardwalk. The Boardwalk didn't last too long. They had a roller coaster and after a while they had a death on it and the place went to pieces. When it broke up they moved to the dance pavillion across the street and that became Madura's Danceland. At the State Line you could change over to a Chicago street line and ride into Chicago for a dime.

As a kindergartner, I went to Wallace School and I had Miss Nixon as Principal. From there I went to Kenwood

School. For the seventh grade, I went to Washington School and Miss Pettit was Principal and she was pretty tough. She wasn't afraid of anybody. It's a lot different today. They're afraid of the kids, a lot of them. In those days they weren't afraid of the kids. When I graduated, we were the first class to graduate from eight grade. Previous to that you graduated from the seventh grade. Because of that added year of maturity in high school we did a lot better in competitive athletics then previous teams.

When I went to high school, I played football for Carl Huffine. In those days we went to football camp at Camp Betz. A. L. Spohn was the Principal. When he put you out of school, there were no deals, no lawyers. You were out! You had to go to night school in Gary to get your diploma. There were some well known names in Hammond that had to go there. Some of the people who were in my group in high school: A boy named Chuck Hohman. Eleanor Gostlin of the family for whom they named Gostlin Street. As a sophomore, I had a date with Eleanor Gostlin and we went out to Wagner's Barbecue. I said, I don't know how many girls I asked to go out before you. I was so green that I didn't know you weren't supposed to tell a girl that she was the fifth or sixth choice. The Betz girls lived over at State Line and 165th. Betty Betz was world-known as a swimmer. She later wrote children's books.

Bob Vogel played on our team. He was the biggest kid in high school. He has Vogel's Restaurant now. He was the only fellow in school that had a car. His father had a restaurant at the end of George Lake Road. There was nothing but water on both sides of the road. I was afraid that big touring car was going to go over into the water on the way to his road house. Some called it a restaurant, but I say it was a road house because why else did all these big limousines come out from Chicago? At the end of every football season for four years, his dad would give a party for the team, all the coaches and all, and I tell you we had all the fish, chicken and fries we could eat.

This was during the Depression. We lost our business. Stores were going out of business. Banks were going out of business. You couldn't get a job like the kids today going to MacDonalds, Arby's, and gasoline stations. You were lucky if your dad had a job, let alone you having one. So Chuck Gargas and myself started washing and waxing cars in my back yard. And then we lined up a deal with Calumet Floral that we would get all the business we could

in flowers and corsages. In our senior year, he was class president and I was vice-president and we made sure we got the business. That's the way we could go to the proms and so forth. It was a time of great competition and also of great closeness. You knew everybody in school. Our graduating class was the biggest to that date, and we had our graduating ceremonies in the Paramount Theatre.

In 1919 George Halas played in the Rose Bowl with Great Lakes in January and that summer he got a job on the Burlington and Quincy Railroad in Chicago. He heard there was a semi-pro football team out in Hammond owned and operated by a Dr. A. A. Young. He came out here and he ran into Paddy Driscoll and a fellow named Jimmie Councilman who was later the football coach of the Chicago Cardinals when they finally won the national football league championship. They got a hundred dollars a game. In 1920 they met in Akron, Ohio, and Hammond was one of the teams that paid a hundred dollars to organize the American Professional Football Association. I did not meet A. A. Young until 1927. Those semi-pro teams played over here on Turner Field. Harry Young, A. A. Young's son and I were good friends in high school, but what happened to Harry, I don't know. Another person I saw at Turner Field was Jim Thorpe, the celebrated Indian professional football player. In those days after games, they went to Roth's Tavern over here west of Hohman and he would wine them and dine them and send them on their way with money. I remember one time following along with a bunch of kids, and there was this fellow, and I said, who is it, and they said, that's Grover Cleveland Alexander.

After high school, I worked for two years at Lever Brothers. One night in August I talked with this fellow about possibly changing my time of work. I was packing Rinso, \$21.60 a week, ten at night until six in the morning except on Sunday from twelve to six. I thought I could possibly change my hours so I could go to DePaul in Chicago. He said, I don't want any dog-gone college kids working for me. Only he said it in a little stronger terms. So, by golly, I went home and packed my grip and the next morning I got my pay and hitch-hiked to Terre Haute. I never came home all year.

Well, some time after I graduated, I was walking by Hammond High School and I saw Carl Huffine. He said you better get over to the Board of Education. Lee Caldwell wants to see you. He said you're going to coach out at Morton High School.



MEMORIES OF HAMMOND AROUND 1900

October 1980
By Maria Hesterman

Among recent gifts to the Society was a paper relating memories of early Hammond of Mrs. Maria Hesterman who immigrated from Pommerania, Germany, in 1888 with her parents, Mr. & Mrs. Herman Magdanz, a brother and sister. The family located at the corner of Maywood and Michigan Streets and later on Murray Street.

When the Magdanz family arrived in Hammond, it was a town of about 7,000 inhabitants with homes scattered about, south and north of the Grand Calumet River. Gardens and flowers reached to the front gates and homes had fences around them to keep out the domestic stock which each family possessed. Most families were large with many children.

North of the Hohman Avenue Bridge, Hohman Avenue was cedar blocked until the beginning of Gostlin Street. Fish could be caught in Billy Boyd's Ditch which later became Columbia Avenue, where a small stream flowed from the south, through a culvert under the Michigan Central tracks and emptied into the Calumet River.

Many boats plied the Grand Calumet River where, on Sunday afternoons, men sat fishing along the banks. Often a fruit and vegetable boat came in loaded with a fine quality of apples, pears, potatoes and other produce to be bought forty-five to fifty cents a bushel. Wild roses, wild strawberries, blueberry patches and late fall nuts made the glades and wooded areas very attractive.

Mrs. Hesterman recalls many fine boat rides on Sunday afternoons down the Calumet River starting at Calumet Avenue. A boat could be rented for four hours at fifty cents from Nick Kahl and usually they went up to East Bend now north of Shell Oil property. She remembers going in 1905 with Fred C. Hesterman who became her husband and picking an armful of white and pale yellow lillies about a

mile east of Calumet Avenue. It was not unusual to go blueberry picking, walking down the Michigan Central tracks to the Gibson and Hessville districts and even farther.

Christmas trees were cut around Clark Station, now in Gary. Wax candles burned on the trees since homes did not yet have electricity. In 1909, gas was installed which was considered a great luxury.

There were very few means of employment, Mrs. Hesterman recalls, and great distress was felt when, shortly after the turn of the century, the Hammond Meat Packing Company moved to Chicago. Every little concern that came to Hammond and gave work to a few more people was deeply appreciated.

Great joy came to the city in 1898 when the Conkey Book Bindery came and gave occupations to many workers, especially to those young women who had had only domestic work in Chicago. Factories in those days started at 7:00 a.m. and closed at 6:00 p.m. The wages were from two to three dollars per week for a six day week. The book bindery was a great help to many Hammond families all with very small cash incomes and Conkey Street then came into existence. There were no homes built south of this street. All was wooded area.

It was natural to walk along beside Calumet Avenue in the hot yellow sand in the summertime and in the wintertime over the frozen wagon tracks. Everyone walked then, and it was considered a real virtue. Nothing was thought of taking a walk from Hohman Avenue and State Street to Kenwood Avenue. They had no moving picture places and only two or three ice cream parlors which seldom had ice cream in the winter months.

Beautiful flowers and large oleander shrubs in different colors grew around Mrs. Jacob Rimbach's home on Hohman Avenue which became the location of the Lion Store with Kaufman and Wolf as proprietors until that gave way to the structure of Goldblatt's Department Store.

There was no local mail delivery in those days; everyone called for their mail at the post office. At one time, the post office was located on West State Street, a few doors west of Schloer's Shoe Store. Later it moved to the northwest corner of Hohman and State Streets in an old frame building with a round turret and still later it moved

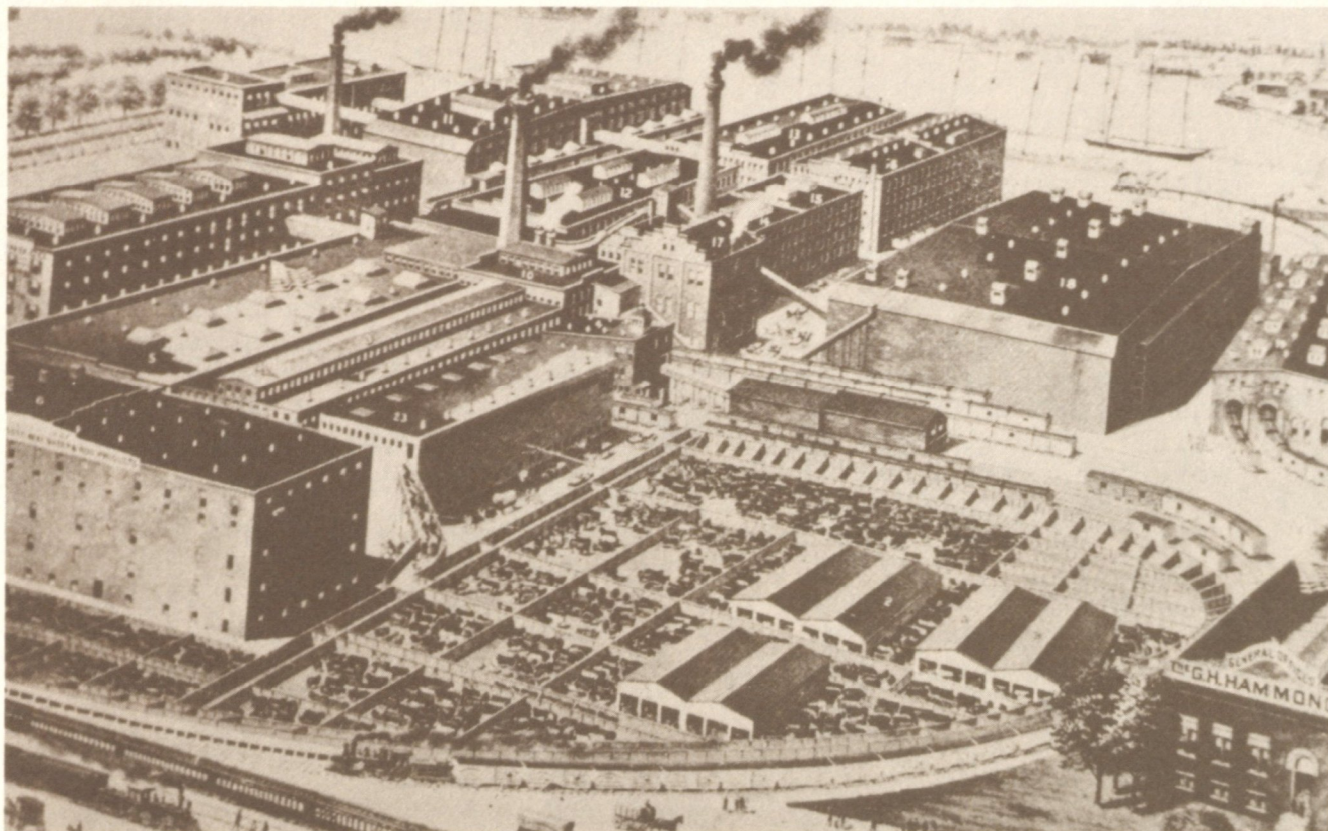
to the southeast corner where the Woolworth Store was built. After 1900, there were a few horse and buggy mail carriers who covered a very large territory.

Yellow sand roads, heavy wooden sidewalks built at different angles and levels, the shrill whistles of boats passing on the clear waters of the Grand Calumet River as they approached the drawbridge at Hohman Avenue, and stately white swans gliding up and down the lagoon at Harrison Park were the predominant impressions of Hammond.

Harrison Park became a fine place to go and a showplace for visitors. Calumet Avenue had no walks and only a few homes. Only prairie land stretched to the east in 1898. Hohman Avenue was a residential avenue lined with stately homes.



Harrison Park



G. H. Hammond Packing Company in 1900.



G. H. Hammond Packing Company after the 1904 fire.



SNOWBALLS IN THE BOOK DROP OR SOME FUNNY THINGS THAT HAVE HAPPENED TO ME AT THE LIBRARY

November - December 1980
By Edward B. Hayward

I will soon be retiring from a career of over thirty years as a public librarian and, while it is not an occupation that one would expect would provide a lot of exciting experiences, I have looked forward to almost every day with interest and usually have been eager to get to the library and begin on whatever I had planned to do.

Some days, however, don't start out the way one anticipates. One Sunday afternoon I arrived to take my turn at the Reference Desk only to be greeted with the news that someone had put snowballs in the bookdrop and they were melting fast because the heat wouldn't turn off and it was 90o in the Community Room where the Historical Society was to meet. Panic or mirth seemed equally appropriate responses, but this crisis, like others, did not prove to be fatal.

The public library in America is a kind of silent battle of ideas and opinions where even the most strident and outrageous contention finds a place on the shelves with the most reasoned argument. Hammond citizens have been very tolerant of books about unpopular subjects or containing four letter words of Anglo-Saxon origin. Perhaps this is because we are a community of so many religious faiths, political loyalties and ethnic heritages that an attitude of live and let live is the only way of peaceful survival.

A few books have called forth expressions of unhappiness from officials or citizens. When Why Johnny Can't Read was published, the Superintendent of Schools sequestered all copies for a while. A little later two funeral directors attended a library board meeting to protest the inclusion on our shelves of The American Way of Death. Board members told them they should not try to suppress criticism of their profession, but counter it with more factual information. At their suggestion, other books

on funeral customs were accepted and the meeting ended amicably. Books about human sexual mores and customs are a source of unending skirmishing between those who would try to censor such knowledge and those who believe it should be freely accessible to all.

The building of the new Main Library on State Street was an interesting time for me. For a while we owned the old bombed out State Street Theatre building. There were three or four feet of water in the basement. Fabian and Fabian Surveyors had to make a survey for the architect. They brought an aluminum boat and paddled it around using flashlights and taking measurements.

The library issued 360 bonds with a face value of \$5,000 each. Mrs. Angelique Murphy was Treasurer of the Board. When we were to close the sale of the bonds at the bond attorney's office in Chicago, we discovered that she had missed signing one bond. I had to make a quick trip via the South Shore back to Hammond to have it signed, but late that sunny morning I walked down Michigan Avenue with a check for \$1,800,000.00 in my brief case to pay for the construction of the Main Library and the Howard Branch.

In the summer of 1967, after we moved the books and furniture from the old Main Library in Central park to the new building still under construction, the old building was demolished. Things were going smoothly enough by August so that I got away to Vermont for two weeks of vacation. I left instructions that the cornerstone box from the old library was to be saved, but the contractor understood that we wanted the whole cornerstone. This was transported with a crane and still rests outside the employee's entrance on the east side of the library. It makes a fairly good bench. The copper box was also saved and contained some interesting papers and relics which are now in the Calumet Room.

Culmination of the years of dreaming and planning for the new library, of course, came with the dedication and the ceremonies of that week in October of 1967.

The raising of the American Flag presented to the library by VFW Post 802 heralded a week of celebration marking the advent of the new Main Library. Downtown Hammond merchants ran full page advertisements in the Hammond Times featuring pictures of the new building and inviting citizens to tour the library throughout the week. News articles also appeared each day reporting on the many

events of the week. Banners and streamers flew over State Street and from the porticos at the main entrances. Tickets obtained at the library could be deposited in stores along State Street for a prize drawing which was held at the library on the last day of the celebration. An illustrated brochure was printed and distributed to visitors.

The high school bands of Hammond and other musical groups gave concerts during the week starting with a folk singing group from Hammond Technical High School. The Hammond Exchange Club presented the "Freedom Shrine," a set of mounted facsimilies of documents of American History. The Hammond Kiwanis Club met for luncheon in the Community Room and presented "The Blue Cat of Castleton," memorial to Herbert L. Wilhelm. Paintings by Michael Daumer were presented by the Hammond Intermediate Woman's Club and hung in the Adult Department.

Throngs of Hammond citizens filled the main floor of the new Hammond Public Library for the program of dedication on Tuesday evening, October 24, 1967, as a high wind and rain lashed the outside of the building. Of the ceremonies presided over by Library Board President, Esther Eggers, the Hammond Times said:

"Dr. Preston Bradley in a stirring address. . . told of his love for books which dates back to his childhood in a small Michigan village. . . He urged parents to see that their children learn to love books. . . He said there can be no great moral society until man develops great spiritual sensitivity. He said hope lives only in a true culture, one which respects our differences."

Mr. Bradley joined others in lauding the beauty of the new library. "Somebody had a vision," he said.

Cordell Pinkerton, City Attorney, who represented Mayor Edward B. Dowling, called the library, ". . . a wonderful edifice. It is beautiful, wonderful, magnificent. . . a landmark which will enrich the community."

Presentation of the building was made for the Architect by August L. Ignelzi, Partner in the firm of Besozzi, Carpenter & Ignelzi; for the contractors by Elio Largura, President of Superior Construction Company; and for the community by John F. Wilhelm, President of the Hoosier State Bank and Vice-president of the Library Board. I accepted custody of the library on behalf of the staff.

The Hammond High School Band provided music for the dedication program. The invocation was given by Msgr. Vincent Lengerich, Pastor of St. Joseph Parrish. The Benediction was given by the Reverend John Colsten, Associate Pastor of the First Baptist Church.

After the program, guided tours of the building were conducted by library staff members and refreshments were served by members of the library staff.

VAGARIES OF THE SEASONS

On Thursday, January 26, 1967, I was in Indianapolis with Mrs. Ursula Washburn, President of the Indiana Library Trustee Association, and Hardin Smith, Director of the East Chicago Public Library, planning the 1967 Indiana Library Association Fall Conference. We were at the office of Pat Murphy, Manager of The Stouffer Inn, then under construction, when I got a call from Fern Arnold asking permission to close the library. Snow was blowing into the parking lot and predictions were ominous. It was raining hard as we left Indianapolis and we began to run into sleet.

Mrs. Washburn said, "If we can just get to Kentland, we'll be all right because my husband is home and you and Mr. Smith can stay with us until driving conditions are better." The roads became more icy as we progressed north. We passed cars which had slid off the road and there were police road blocks. Mrs. Washburn was able to convince the police that she must get home and we finally reached Kentland. Her husband met us at the door, saying that the electricity and telephone were off in the whole town and their furnace would not work without electricity. He had tried to call earlier to tell her to stay in Indianapolis. No traffic moved north of Kentland on Route 41 for three days.

This was the renowned snowstorm of 1967 about which all inhabitants of the Calumet Region and Chicago at that time have a story to tell. We kept a fire going in the Washburn's fireplace, had some communal meals in the high school gymnasium and were finally able to drive to Hammond on Sunday to help dig our families out of the snowdrifts.

The Stouffer Inn was completed just in time for the 1967 Indiana Library Association Conference. As program planner and coordinator in charge of all arrangements, I had

a room provided by the management and was treated to a champagne breakfast with the manager at his private table in the roof-top restaurant. It was fun to go around watching all the programs take place as we had planned them, in the meeting and banquet rooms of the new hotel.

Winters after I came to Hammond in 1954, seemed mild in comparison to those in Wisconsin where I had lived for six years and Vermont where I grew up. Except for the problems of clogged traffic and responsibility for the library buildings, I sort of missed the big snowstorms.

In January of 1958, there was a storm in the Calumet Region that virtually closed Hammond down for a day. I was alone all morning in the old library listening to the grandfather clock ticking away. By noon, I was able to plough my way over to the only place open for meals, Roth's Tavern, where I had a thick roast beef sandwich and a glass of beer. The next day, I had chains put on the library station wagon and ferried branch librarians around the libraries so we could reopen. Schools were closed, but children were out in the neighborhoods and we wanted them to be able to come to their libraries.

OLD MAIN

When I came to Hammond in 1954, the Main Library was fifty years old. According to a blue print I found, almost none of the rooms were used as originally planned. The men's club room had become the cataloging department; the auditorium on the second floor was the children's room and the staff kitchen had been remodeled from the space formerly used to store soft coal. A small office behind the Circulation Desk held desks for me and my secretary, Fern Arnold, a table for board meetings and shelves where books waiting to be carded by the desk attendant were kept.

Board members thought my selection of professional reading was strange. Sometimes we would hear children slipping up the stairs past our office to the adult bookstacks. They were fascinated by the floors which were made of plate glass set into the steel framework. Another attraction was the spiral staircase between Marjorie Sohl's office and the magazine stacks in the basement. Heat and cold, thunderstorms and snowstorms took their toll of the old building. Everyone knew where to put the pails to catch

the drips when it rained hard or when snow melted off the roof. Every department had electric fans for hot days and electric heaters for cold spells.

CELEBRATING OUR NATION'S 200TH BIRTHDAY

One day in the fall of 1974, a gentleman came into my office and introduced himself as John Bowlby. He said the Mayor had appointed him to be Chairman of Hammond's American Bicentennial Committee and, although he was retired and was looking forward to going fishing in Florida, he felt he owed to his country and his city to help with the observance of our nation's birthday.

This was the beginning of an association with a man who radiated such optimism and good will that few could withstand his requests to put aside personal concerns for a little while and assist with this patriotic celebration.

He would come bouncing in with a briefcase full of projects to be undertaken, names of people who had promised to donate materials, time, or money to get them accomplished and follow-up letters to be written to make sure their promises were not forgotten. No financial support was ever received from the city, state or federal governments, but we had a fine celebration anyway.

The record of Hammond's Bicentennial observance is included in Hammond Indiana's American Bicentennial Yearbook and elsewhere. The Yearbook was not published until January, 1977, so Warren Reeder, its principal author, did not live to see the finished product of his contribution to the Bicentennial. It was interesting work putting the book together with the help of Lillian Jefchak, our "artist in residence," Charles Tinkham of Purdue Calumet, Florence Cleveland, researcher in local history, and typists, Pam Jostes and Pat Kretzman. Rand McNally Company printed the book at cost which was underwritten by donations from Hammond firms and individuals. We originally had grandiose plans for the printing of 25,000 copies hoping every Hammond family would want one, but printing arrangements and financing delayed publication and we finally printed 5,200 copies.

One hundred cartons, each containing 52 books, is still a lot of books, as I discovered when I went to pick them up with the library van at the Rand McNally loading

dock. John Bowlby had plans that the steel companies would give copies to employees as Christmas gifts and, if he had lived to promote the distribution of the books, I don't doubt that we would have sold them all in short order and had about \$20,000 for our Bicentennial Scholarship Fund. Without him, it's taking longer; we still have fifty-nine cartons of these books stored in the library basement as well as copies on consignment to library branches, the Hammond Historical Society, P.T.A.s, Purdue Calumet and the Hammond City Planning Office.

BRANCH LIBRARIES

Hammond was building new schools and remodeling old ones in anticipation of the effects of the post-war baby boom when I came to the library in 1954. A plan had been adopted to provide a branch public library in each new or remodeled elementary school. The Wilson Branch had been opened that Spring, furniture received and librarians appointed for the Lincoln and Riley Branches. Contracts had also been approved for libraries at Jefferson and Lafayette Schools. Repairs and improvements were needed at the other branch libraries. Sand had washed from under the floor at Hansen Branch so that the circulation desk was three inches lower than the door and perimeter shelving was tilting away from the walls. Roofs leaked at Keeler, Rupp and Hansen Branches. Much of my time, therefore, was spent in planning, organizing and staffing the new libraries and on repairs and improvements to the older ones.

The future of public library branches in Hammond is difficult to envision. Family life has changed considerably during the past twenty-five years. It may be that the neighborhood branch library will go to the way of the neighborhood theater and the corner grocery store as the home computer and television screen provide communications, entertainments, information and instruction to people of all ages. I doubt, however, that anyone will ever curl up with a good cathode ray terminal on a cold winter night.

The recent sale of the old Keeler Branch Library provided the occasion for another slightly bizarre experience. When it came time for the closing, the buyer arrived with a suitcase containing mixed currency in bundles of \$100 each. Our lawyer asked why she hadn't exchanged it for a bank check. She said, "That would have cost \$5.00!" We spent quite a while counting bills and when I took the

money to the bank to deposit, the teller looked as though she suspected some money laundering scheme was in progress.

GREAT BOOKS DISCUSSIONS

In 1956, the American Association of University Women's Chapter in Hammond organized a Great Books Discussion Group which met at the Hammond School Administration building on Hohman Avenue. Dorothy Hendricks (now Dorothy Nelson) and Irene Herlocker were to be the leaders. Response by both men and women was so good that the group was divided in two with Bob Herlocker and me as the leaders for the second group. My credentials went back to the founding fathers of the Great Books movement at the University of Chicago, Mortimer Adler and Robert Hutchins, since I had received instruction under two of their students at Great Books training sessions in Milwaukee and been a Great Books discussion leader at the Racine Public Library.

The procedure of the Great Books Discussions is for two leaders who employ the Socratic method of questioning to meet with a group of about twelve to twenty adults of varied backgrounds and discuss selections from the "Great Books of the Western World" published by the Great Books Foundation of Chicago. Each set of books includes about fifteen selections from classical to contemporary authors. When the leaders are successful, they give the participants an opportunity to measure their experience in office, factory or home against the ideas and theories propounded in the most influential writings from ancient to modern times.

The men and women who have participated in Great Books become acquainted in a special way. Basic assumptions about life and death, conventional beliefs, traditional religion and politics are all questioned and in the interchange of expressions and interpretations of the author's and each other's statements we soon come to feel that we know one another better than people with whom we have associated much longer in other ways. People who hold opposite opinions about almost everything come back year after year to renew their arguments and their friendship.

The two groups meeting at the Hammond School's Administration Building merged after the second year and met in the basement library room. When that branch library moved to Conkey Street, Great Books met there for several seasons. In 1967, we moved to the Calumet Room in the new

Hammond Main Library where the group, some new and some who have been members for many years, resume discussions each fall and meet about twice a month until May each year.

NATIONAL LIBRARY CONFERENCES

Conferences sponsored by the American Library Association each year in some large city in the United States or Canada have given me much help in my career and many enjoyable times.

At the 1968 conference in Saint Louis, Alex Haley was one of the most interesting speakers. He told about his experience in tracing his ancestry back to the son of an African warrior who was captured and transported to Maryland as a slave in the Eighteenth Century. After a long time this story was published as the novel, Roots and made into the phenomenal TV series which has inspired so much genealogical research in libraries and archives recently.

At a crucial time in the passage of the Library Services and Construction Act, I was the coordinator for the state lobbying effort for this legislation. Our delegation entertained Indiana's senators and representatives at an Indiana table during a Congressional Luncheon in Washington. In the official picture of the group in the Indiana Library Association magazine I am identified as "with halo." A silver ring on the hat crown of a woman sitting at the next table appears to be directly over my head.

Several conferences were held in San Francisco. John Wilhelm, who served on the Library Board from 1946 to 1976 attended one of these with me. He was tireless in attending meetings, sight-seeing, finding exotic restaurants and party going. We rode the cable cars to Fisherman's Wharf, Chinatown and Julius' Castle, taxis from the Mark Hopkins to the Auditorium and back, and street cars up and down Market Street. He and Ethel went on the Los Angeles after the Conference and I came home to rest.

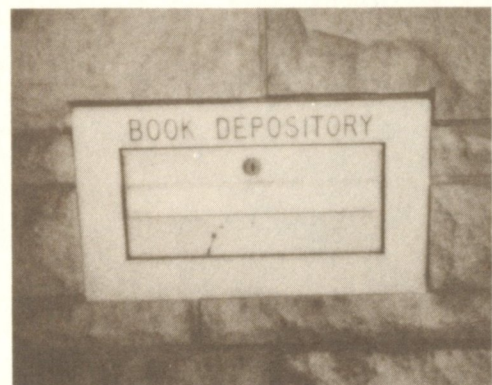
On a Sunday afternoon before the Conference in Montreal, John induced the other Board members attending and me to charter a taxi and tour the city. This was shortly after the Soviet invasion of Hungary and our taxi driver turned out to be a Hungarian refugee who barely spoke English and didn't know anything about the city. We got lost in every possible quarter of the city, but had a hilarious

time. In Detroit John Wilhelm, Warren Reeder and I went to the Detroit Public Library and found a lot of material about George Hammond and the invention of the refrigerator car.

August Ignelzi and I were on the program of the Architectural and Building Committee at a Conference in Cleveland to present the plans for the Main Library Building and to have them critiqued by some of the leaders in the architectural and library field. We were quite apprehensive before this august company, but they were very kind to us and we were given some good advice and suggestions.



Hammond Public Library





REMINISCENCES OF HAMMOND IN THE 1920'S

November 1980 - March 1981
By Maurice O'Hern

From a recording made at a Hammond Historical Program,
October 19, 1980.

I'm going to talk about Hammond in the 1920's from a boy's point of view. I was born in 1914 so in 1925 I was eleven years old. Bear in mind this is not from the mayor's viewpoint or that of a banker or the main families but from that of a boy in typical working man's family of the time. My father was a factory worker. I think most Hammond families in those days were supported by factory work.

HOME

Where do you start with memories? I lived on Summer Street and I will start with memories of my home. My dad was a clerk in the Standard Car Shop and for those ten years, he was laid off twice; typical of factory work during those years.

The great thing now-a-days is the family room. Boy did we have a family room in this 1,000 to 2,000 dollar house, -- the kitchen! It was the center of our lives. How great it was! Our bedrooms weren't heated, of course, and first thing in the morning we three kids would rush to get to the warm kitchen. We would have our breakfast there and, of course, came back there for dinner. Then after school we would do our chores, then go out and play in the neighborhood, then come back for supper when our dad came home. After supper, back to the kitchen again to do our homework. Of course there was no TV, and no radio at the start. The kitchen was where the family was centered, especially the mother and children. My mother did the ironing and mending there. My mother never got beyond fourth grade. Not because she wasn't smart. Because she was a coal miner's daughter and from the time she was

fourteen, she earned her own living. Still she instilled in us a great love of learning and great love for music. In those days, after our home work was done, we would read books like Horatio Alger books, Frank Merriwell, Dick Merriwell, and the greatest of all for boys -- Zane Grey.

Some of the things I remember that happened in the family room: Remember the old ice box? The ice man would bring the twenty-five pound or fifty pound block of ice and as it melted, it kept things cool. But how many of you remember the pan underneath? How many remember coming out in the morning and seeing the little lake on the kitchen floor? How heavy that pan was and how hard it was to get it out without spilling more water all over the place. In the winter time everybody had a window box. All winter long we would put the butter, lard, bacon -- anything perishable in the window box. No charge refrigeration.

Hot water. Mother would heat water on the stove. Saturday nights she'd heat all the water for baths and bring it in the bathroom and put it in the tub. Same thing for washing. She had a tub and scrub board. I could never understand why she didn't rub her knuckles raw. Put the American Family Soap in the tub and rub, rub, rub. A couple of years later she did get a washing machine, a Thor, a wooden barrel that sloshed the clothes around so she didn't have to scrub them.

We bought the house in 1920. Between the living room and the dining room were portiers. In the front room we had our hand-wound phonograph with such records as those of Harry Lauder, John McCormack, Enrico Caruso. How many remember the song, Barney Google? From my dad's pay my mother scraped enough to buy a piano and all three of us kids took lessons.

The dining room was sort of my dad's place. We got one of the first radios in the neighborhood. We didn't have a car but we did get a radio, an Atwater Kent with its cornucopia of a horn. It was in the dining room. For the Dempsy-Tunney fight people came from all around the neighborhood. One of my father's fellow workmen that came was Tony Piatt that later played for the Chicago White Sox. I well remember that. About this time any kid worth his salt made his own crystal set. Remember those? You had a little whisker and it had to be set just right and out of the crystal would come the tinny sounds from unimaginably far away.

Then there was the basement and the coal bin. Every Saturday, carry out the ashes. When the coal was delivered, there it would be dumped on the curb. Nobody had driveways. It would be my job to load the coal into a wheelbarrow, wheel it to a cellar window and dump it down. How the dirt must have flown and my mother would have had to clean up the coal dust.

In those days of prohibition people had their mash behind their furnace. Like everybody else, my dad had to make his own home brew. About two o'clock in the morning, bang-whish. What happened, the house blew up! Everybody had his own secret formula for home brew and whenever company came to the house, you had to offer them some of your home brew. It was only hospitality to accept so you were stuck both ways. I don't remember my dad ever opening a bottle that didn't spew all over the place. It was really powerful stuff.

Before I went to school each morning, I had to go over to Klinesschmidt's store at the corner of Maywood and Sibley Streets and buy the morning paper--the Chicago Tribune. Year after year, how well I remember, up in the right hand corner it said "2¢" pay no more. Two weeks ago, it went to 25¢. How times change!

The last thing I remember about each day was my father winding the clock. That was the last act of the day. All was calm. All was secure.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD

From memories of home, we go to the neighborhood. A big thing was cars. The people next door had a Moon. Down two doors they had a car that was called a Star. At the corner of Summer Street and Columbia Avenue a brick building was put up which became a car agency. The cars sold were Whippets. Remember all the makes of cars there were in those days?

Remember when the ice wagon would come down the street? What a great treat on a hot day to jump up in the wagon while the ice man was delivering the ice to your house and get the chips. How about the milk man? The horse would know just where to stop. Remember the sounds of the wheels turning in the winter. That's the coldest sound in the world. The sound of steel wheels turning on hard packed

snow. Then by the time you brought the milk bottles in, remember the cap of frozen milk sticking up out of the top. How we kids used to fight about who would get the most on his cereal! And the grocery man. Can you imagine the grocery store delivering today? The farmers in the summertime delivering their produce. Mothers always liked to get it fresh.

The garbage man. We boys were fascinated by the horses. Big dappled greys. We were told they had once been fire horses. Another man that came through the neighborhood was the junk man. It was many years before I figured out what he was saying. You'd hear him way in the distance, "Regs, regs." It was a very plaintive sound. Another would cry "Regs'l iron. Regs'l iron." In one of my boyhood wanderings I found an old well point. It was a big piece of iron about eighteen inches long. I thought, "Boy, I'll make a fortune out of this." Finally, one day, I heard the junk man coming. I only got a nickel! The disappointments of youth.

Remember the knife sharpeners with their little carts? You could hear them blocks away swinging their little bell. Mothers used to like to have them come because they could get their knives and scissors sharpened. For some reason, they were not only knife sharpeners, they also mended umbrellas. Every year or two the chimney sweeps would come by. They would blow a bugle. If you wanted your chimney cleaned you could hear them four or five blocks away and get your chimney ready. For kids what a wagon of splendor was the ice cream wagon! Red, white, yellow, silver; selling ice cream and popcorn. Door to door salesmen.

Every householder's problem was trying to be polite to those pushy characters selling life insurance, vacuum cleaners, kitchen gadgets. Every once in a while a hobo would come along. Mother never turned one away. She'd fix a sandwich or a bowl of soup. She'd have them eat it on the porch, but she always had something for them.

Before radio started publishing the news, when something big happened, I remember this character, I think his name was Heiny Wulf, would come along shouting "Extra. Wuxtra. Read all about it." Selling papers.

How about the games we played. Run sheep, run. Pum, pum, pull away. Shimy on your own side. Mumbly peg. Buck,

buck, how many fingers up. Football and basketball. The balls weren't pumped up with needles like they are now. You undid the lacing and a rubber valve about as big as a pencil popped up. You blew it up and tried to get it tucked in again. Nobody ever had a round basketball. That thing stuck out like an egg. Scooters. I think that everyone had at one time or another a home made scooter. You took an orange crate, a piece of two-by-four and put an old roller skate on each end and you had a scooter. We used to make stilts. Make a pair of stilts and walk around banging into each other. Coming home from school, if you saw a tin can, you'd kick it all the way home. Your mother couldn't understand why your shoes were all banged up. Boys throwing rocks. you had to throw rocks at everything, wagons, telephone poles, each other. How did we live to grow up!

Looking back there are things we did that really scare me. Flipping rides. It was relatively easy in those days to hop on the back of a truck and ride a ways. I tried it and got knocked on my head. So I didn't try again. In the wintertime boys would hook their sled ropes on a car axle and get a dangerous ride.

Childhood diseases were expected. The quarantine officer would come around and put a sign on the door. "Measles, chicken pox, diptheria, scarlet fever." We'd go past the door of houses with those signs holding our breath. That was just one of our superstitions. We had lots of such superstitions. All boys did. One in our neighborhood was, if you saw a millipede, you must keep your mouth closed because if he saw your teeth, you'd be sure to die that day. Well, it must have worked. I'm not dead and I kept my mouth shut.

In the 20's, every neighborhood had a sand lot where boys could play. We played football, baseball, dug caves, built shacks. How great they were. When we played games no one knew where the boundary lines were, but we played by the hour and probably argued as much as we played.

The sandlots were also where the medicine shows set up. They had an Indian or someone dressed up like an Indian standing in the background on the stage. He'd say "ugh" or do a little dance once in a while. Or they'd have a banjo player and attract people in the neighborhood. After they got their crowd together, they'd give their pitch for this medicine. As I look back on this now, I see how they worked

it. A man would say, "I want another bottle of that. I bought some two years ago and it cured my rheumatism or my sciatica or my bad tooth." Of course, he was a shill to get things started. Whenever buying lagged, they'd start the Indian dance or the banjo playing again.

One of the big places for medicine shows was in downtown Hammond about where Rosalee's is now. At one they advertised they were showing the Cardiff Giant. He was supposed to be in back of the stage behind a curtain. I went over and stood around and the man said, "Go ahead in and see it." So I went in. Here it was, a stone man. It didn't impress me much. It just looked awful dead. So I just walked out and the man got mad. He said I was supposed to put a nickel or a dime in the can.

THEATERS

I'll start with the DeLuxe Theater across from Goldblatts, just because it was something special. On a Sunday afternoon, my dad would take us three kids to the show so my mother could have a little peace and quiet. Dad took us a special way, down Summer Street to the end of the street car line at Columbia and Sibley. We would ride the street car all the way down Columbia to Conkey, Conkey to Hohman, and Hohman to the DeLuxe Theater. We saw a lot of great shows. One was Douglas Fairbanks in "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves." I still remember him jumping out of those big jars. Another was Coleen Moore in "Peter Pan." The dog in the show (it must have been a man dressed as a dog) stole the show.

Then there was the Bijou. We called it the "Bi-jo". I guess it was supposed to be the Bijou which is French for jewel. This is where we saw William S. Hart, the greatest cowboy actor of all time. I remember one scene where he sat on his horse outside a saloon and threw his lariat over the swinging doors, lasooed three bad guys standing at the bar and dragged them into the street. They also had the serials where they would always leave the hero running into a buzz-saw, falling under the wheels of a train, and so forth. You had to go back the next week to see what happened to him.

William S. Hart was superseded in our affections by Hoot Gibson at the Orpheum. Do you remember the Orpheum when they had stage players every day? Twice a week they

changed plays. How could they do that! For several years they had stage plays. They had the same cast, the leading man, the leading woman, the old man, the dowager, the ingenue, the comic relief actor, and for about two years they put on two plays each week.

Then there was the Parthenon. That was where they had kissing type movies. We boys didn't care for that sort of thing. We would go if Lon Chaney was there. We'd see these grand ushers. The big organ. They also had vaudeville shows and that was great. One time they had Rin-tin-tin on the stage with a Rin-tin-tin movie. After the movie he was in the lobby with his trainer and I walked up and touched him. That was a great experience for a boy.

The State Theater. What a beautiful building it was! I was in a classroom right across the street when it was going up. We were supposed to be doing our school work there at All Saints, but we could also look out the window and watch the workmen. I was so fascinated, not so much by the brick layers, but by the riveters. One fellow would get a rivet red hot in a little stove and throw it maybe forty or fifty feet to the fellow doing the actual riveting who would catch it in a little cup. They never missed! I'd think what if he missed and one of those red hot rivets would go down someone's back?

I was an altar boy at All Saints. At seven o'clock the morning after the theater was blown up, I came walking down here and saw this horrible mess. That beautiful theater just devastated! Roof blown off, sides blown out and trash all over the street. I looked at the school and every window was broken. I didn't know what to do. The church was above the school and there was debris all over the place. Right on the altar was a piece of the panic bar. I just started in trying to put the sanctuary back in order.

It broke our hearts. We had been so proud of the State Theater. It was the most modern and beautiful theater in the whole region at the time that sound movies began to be shown. One of the first sound movies I remember was John Barrymore in "Don Juan."

Some movies were not shown at the regular theaters for some reason. For example, "The Covered Wagon" was shown at Hammond High School. Douglas Fairbanks in "The Gaucho" was shown at the Masonic Temple.

WANDERING

In those days boys wore short pants until graduation from grade school. To keep warm in winter there were such things as Tim Caps, corduroy trousers, and sheepskin jackets. Boys were then, and I presume still are, wanderers and adventurers. So the entire town, including Calumet City (then West Hammond), was our territory. Our wanderings included fishing for bullheads in the Little Calumet River, and checking out the ice harvested from Lake George in the winter. The ice was stored in a huge building in the general area of Gruener's Grove. In my memory it appeared that the ice was stored in slabs that appeared to weigh about 100# and were stored about twenty feet high.

The main intersection in town was, of course, at State and Hohman, the Four Corners. However, Five Points at the junction of Indianapolis and Calumet had a fame of its own. Besides being an important place to make street car transfers, Five Points was also famous for its amusement park, with roller coaster and all, on the site of Lever Brothers. Also, at or near the Five Points were several dance halls, Phil Smidt's and Levent's restaurants, and the Roby race track.

Our wanderings occasionally took us to Calumet City. For a few summers I caddied at the nine hole golf course whose clubhouse is now the American Legion headquarters on Golf Street. At the opening day of the Calumet City Memorial Park swimming pool in about 1926, I was one of the half dozen or so boys from Hammond who sneaked in to enjoy the swimming. On opening day the pool was ready, but the locker room was not ready. So about 100 boys undressed and dressed behind a tarpaulin that had been loosely and hurriedly strung between two external corners of the building. That the wind occasionally provided us with an outdoor clothes changing facility was of no concern to us. Before we could go into the pool, all of us had to walk through a series of showers. Boy were they cold!

Occasionally in the summer time one of the neighbors would bring home a pickup truck from work. For that evening he'd load parents and neighborhood children on the back of the truck and drive us to Pine Beach on Lake Michigan, about half way between Hammond and Gary. Since it was not a public beach there were no facilities for changing clothes. However about 100 yards from the beach there was a small R.R. switch yard that always had some empty coal cars. So

the boys would look for an empty coal car and climb into it to change clothes. The girls had to find their own empty coal car.

SCOUTING

Scouting was something special to boys in those days. I'd guess there were about 500 Scouts in town then. One of the largest troops was Troop 1 (or 3) that met in the basement of the Baptist Church on Sibley Street. Another large troop, to which I belonged, was Troop 10. We met in the Washington School gymnasium. This located west of Hohman in the area of Harrison Park. Several times during the year there would be Boy Scout Jamborees. A half dozen troops would meet and hold competition in such things as First Aid, woodcraft, marching, knot tying, starting campfires without matches. Because the Washington gym was about the largest Scout meeting place most of the Jamborees were held there. The marching was really something to see. One troop finished its marching routine by marching around the gym in single file, and then marching into a circle that was the width of the gym floor. The boys marched single file in this circle until they had the command to halt. The next command was "Sit." And all the Scouts sat down, each in the lap of the scout behind him! I recall those Jamborees for a special reason as one of them gave me my only claim to fame. I was on the champion knot tying team of the City of Hammond.

One of the merit badges was earned by making a 14 mile hike. We hiked from downtown Hammond to what is now known as Wicker Park. In those days it was an undeveloped area surrounded by onion farms. There was a two storied cabin there, and we sometimes spent the night there when the troop had an overnight encampment. About 50 yards from the cabin the Little Calumet River flowed, and provided us with first class swimming. And, because Wicker Park was so far from civilization then, we didn't have to worry about swim suits.

Every Scout had his heart set on going to summer camp at Camp Betz near Berrien Springs, Mich. The first day there, we were each assigned to a cabin. Each cabin bunked eight boys in two tiers. As we were assigned our cabins the first day we were also handed a large bag, called a tick. Our first assignment was to fill the tick with leaves. That was our mattress for our stay at Camp Betz. I guess the 500

Boy Scouts were distributed among 25 Troops. They were all under Chief Scout Scott who had an office on the second floor of the Ruff Building. Helping him was a one-girl office staff.

STREET CARS

Street cars were the main form of city transportation. There was a network of tracks that ran from Five Points south on Sheffield, down Hohman to the Four Corners. From the Four Corners there were tracks that ran south on Hohman to Conkey to Columbia. The tracks then went north on Columbia where they came to an end at Sibley Street. Another track went from the Four Corners east on State Street, to Calumet Avenue, then north on Calumet to 150th (I think). Then to Indianapolis Blvd. in East Chicago and then east to Indianapolis and Gostlin. From there the track went east going to Indianapolis Blvd. and west back to Five Points. From State Line there were connections with the Chicago Surface Lines.

Memories of the street car include almost unendurable waits in cold and blowing weather. But then there was the unbelievable warmth and comfort of the car, with the electric heaters under the seat, when the car finally came. Then there was the high speed run from Five Points down Sheffield to Hohman. The motorman really opened up along the non-stop part of the route. The car would twist and lurch until it seemed that the ends of the car were going in different directions. Then there was the fascination of watching the conductor switch trolleys at the end of the line. This was always accompanied by giant blue sparks as the trolley separated from the power line, or when the replacing trolley neared the power line. Then there was the carbarn at Gostlin and State Line. Occasionally, as you rode along, the single track would become two tracks. The purpose of the second track was to provide a waiting spot for the car until a car coming from the other direction came by. This, of course, allowed the cars to pass each other. To get on the bypass track the motorman had to get off the car and throw the switch manually.

In addition to the Hammond Street Car Line, there was another car line out of Gary that ran down Summer Street, branched over to Sibley shortly before hitting Columbia Avenue, and then went on down to Hohman and Sibley where the track ended.

The interurban car line was the South Shore Line that ran every half hour to Chicago, and came back each half hour on its way to Michigan City and South Bend. A unique feature of the train's service was that there were scheduled stops about every two blocks as the train went through town. Each of these stops had a small wooden shelter from the weather.

A special form of transportation in those days were the Jitneys -- a flash phenomenon. Anyone with a car could make himself a few extra dollars by driving up and down the main thoroughfares and giving people rides for a nickel. Generally the rides were limited in length and direction. However, the Jitneys were popular and for a number of years after their passing a "jitney" was synonymous with a nickel.



Hanish store at Conkey & Harrison, 1920.

TRAIN TIE-UPS

No memories of Hammond in the 1920's would be complete without recalling how Hammond was tied up by trains in those days. The Erie was the major culprit. It was helped significantly by the Nickel Plate, the Monon, the New York Central, the Wabash, and Hammond's very own Indiana Harbor Belt. The Erie in particular specialized in switching when the town was crowded by shoppers -- or so it seemed. Hohman, State, Sibley and all the side streets would be jammed with halted traffic. Horns would be blowing. And all the while the freight cars just stood there. After ten or fifteen minutes the train would move a car length ahead, and then come to a stop again. Then after another five or ten minutes the train would back up a half a car length. And so on--and on--and on.

A particular train memory is the handcars that the repair crews hand powered down the tracks on their way to the job site. Two men would get on each end of the small car, grab the long bar that was mounted on a fulcrum in the middle of the car, and then start pumping. Quite a fuel efficient method of transportation.

Then there was the special IHB train that ran down the Michigan Central tracks each morning to pick up employees waiting at Columbia, Calumet and Hohman. The special would take the employees to work each morning. Each evening the employees would be returned to their waiting locations by the IHB special.

HAMMOND PARKS

As mentioned before, Hammond Parks were special places for boys to be found. Maywood Park had its swimming in the lagoon, its island, fishing for minnows with a bent pin and wad of bread, and ice skating in the winter. It was

at Maywood Park that I first bumped into the privileges of politics. Sometime late in the decade recreation was "improved" by the appointment of a Recreation Director. (One thing youngsters don't need is organized play.) This Recreation Director kept the horseshoes, ping pong sets, quoits and the like under lock and key. On any given day she might not show up at the Park. When she did show up, she invariably gave the special equipment to a select few youngsters. By far the majority of the children who used the park playground never had a chance to use the equipment that came under the exclusive protection of the Director. Because of this situation, I've had a low opinion of Recreation Directors ever since.

For some reason or other Harrison Park had better and more facilities. So we went to Harrison more frequently than we went to Maywood. On Sundays Harrison Park would be put to extensive use with families, ball games, tennis, swimming, enjoyment of gardens (that would soon be vandalized in these days) watching the swans, and listening to the band in the bandstand near Hohman Avenue. I must say, however, that this extended use of the Park was more characteristic of the early '20s than the later '20s. Morris Park, now Columbia Park, attracted sizeable crowds each Sunday with its pass-the-hat-ball games. On the side of the river immediately north of Morris Park was a skeet club site. Guns and noise have a special attraction for boys so we'd sometimes wander over to watch the trap shooting. We'd spend as much time scrambling for spent shells as we would watching the shooters trying to hit the "birds."

Central Park, where the Main Library stood, was quiet and dignified -- mostly because there was nothing there for youngsters. The park was shaded and had magnificent flower beds. However, flowers had little attraction for youngsters. So the library remained a place of quiet. However, there was an unusual public drinking facility at Hohman Avenue immediately west of the Library. This was a public fountain where people could drink from a regular spigot, the kind that stood at many corners throughout town. Attached to the fountain, as part of the base, was a supply of fresh water for any passing, thirsty dog. Topping it all, however, was the side of the fountain that faced Hohman. This had a sizable trough to supply horses that were then fairly common as dray animals. At one time I saw all three fountains being used at the same time.

BASEBALL AND FOOTBALL

I had previously mentioned the special place Turner Field was because of its use for baseball and football for the main teams of Hammond. Some of the baseball teams that played the Hammond team were Duffy Florals, Logan Squares, the House of David from Benton Harbor, Lowell, and a team of Clowns whose first name I do not recall. I mentioned that I was waterboy for the visiting football team -- a job I obtained because a friend of mine was waterboy for the Hammond team. His dad was in charge of the grounds at the park. Instead of antiseptic sprays as are now used to moisten today's players' mouths, a bucket of water was used. Hanging on the rim of the bucket would be two or three dippers. At every timeout it was my job to run out on the field with the bucket so the visiting players could quench their thirsts. Between times the bucket was stored on the ground exposed to the open skies -- and the dirt and mud that might be kicked about. The players on the bench used the same dippers. So in the course of the afternoon, as many as 20 men would use the same dipper -- and put it right back in the bucket without a modicum of cleaning. And believe me, on muddy fields some of the hands and faces were well-plastered with mud.

My only worry came on hot days when the players used up the bucketfull of water. I had to go back to the baseball stands where the showers were to replenish the supply. This was about a 10 minute chore -- a good walk from the football field. By the time I got back with a new supply of water, a quarter could have gone by and I'd get whatfor from the players and the manager. Oh, well, I saw the game from a choice spot, and was paid a dollar for my services.

In those days there were no hash marks on the field. If a play stopped a foot from the sideline, that is where the next play started. This led to some unusual arrangements of players. As waterboy I'd have to be in the visitor's locker room getting my equipment ready for the game. I recall one day I was greatly impressed when the manager of the Hammond team came into the visiting player's locker room before the game. He walked up to the manager of the visiting team and made a bet of \$100.00 that Hammond would win the game. I was really in the big time!

THE KU KLUX KLAN

A specter of those days was the existence in Indiana of the Ku Klux Klan. They were quite strong in Hammond, too. At their peak they demonstrated their power and strength in Hammond by taking over the direction of all Hammond automobile traffic one evening. At all major intersections there was a hooded creature. Just imagine their political ramifications into all top levels of the city administration for this to occur. I recall the dread I felt as I crossed the street at the intersection of Summer Street and Calumet Avenue and had to walk within 20 feet of this sinister personage in the white hood. I think this occurred in about 1926 when I was 12 years old.

DOWNTOWN

I wind up this walk down the Lane of Memories by taking a trip down a trail that boys from our part of town took many times, and enjoyed every time. This was a walk downtown.

As we leave Summer Street and walk onto Calumet Avenue, we come to Hammond's premier Meat Market -- Kuhn's. Then to Sibley and Calumet where we pass Scatena's ice cream emporium (soon to be Rovai's). Scatena's, with its wire-back chairs and wire-legged tables had a cool and delightful atmosphere that exuded the charms of ice cream soda and sundaes. This was the same Scatena that sponsored the Hammond football team.

A block farther north we passed an A & P store on the northeast corner of State and Calumet. In those days the A & P stores were no bigger than the corner grocery stores. At one time in those days I had worked as a stock boy on Saturdays in a similar store in Indiana Harbor. On the southwest corner there was Sweitzer's Grocery -- the first self service grocery store in Hammond. How strange it was to walk up and down the aisles to wait on yourself. It sure seemed strange not to hand your grocery list to the grocer or his clerk and have him run all over the store picking up the items you needed. I remember Sweitzer's in a special manner as they would occasionally hire me to distribute their advertising circulars throughout the neighborhood. For this we would be paid 10¢ an hour. After some weeks of experience, the rate went up to 12-1/2¢ an hour. Not bad pay in those days when you could see Hoot Gibson at the Orpheum for 10¢.

Farther west on State Street we would drop by the Hoess Brothers' Machine Shop on Jesse Street. In the summer time the large shop doors would be open and we would stand in the doorway watching the mysterious motions of machines that we later discovered were lathes, milling machines, drill presses and the like. Then we would pass by Wassey's sewing shop. Close by would be one of our favorite stops, the Walz bicycle shop. None of us ever owned a bike, let alone a new one. However, that did not deter us from enjoying looking at the chrome plated mechanical marvels -- just as we now enjoy looking at chrome plated cars. Then came Griswold's Hardware store on the southwest corner of State and Sohl. It was my periodic task to take my dad's straight razors to Griswold's to have the razors sharpened. On the same trip I might take my dad's hard collars to the Chinese Laundry near the corner of Oakley and Sibley. Across the street from the laundry was the Labor Temple.

As we resumed our walk down State Street we passed Seifer's Furniture Store. When it was built in the mid-twenties it had a large balloon moored to the top of the building. It was quite an attention getter. Certainly it attracted the attention of 12 year old boys. Nearby was the Burns' Funeral Home. On the window sill of the Funeral Home was a clay bust of a man. The bust was unique as it had hundreds of little holes in the head. Grass seed would be put in these holes. With proper nurturing during the warm weather, these seeds sprouted to a simulate hair -- green hair. We enjoyed watching the growth as we came by week after week.

Then on to Tittle's Meat Market near Oakley. For the most part this wasn't much of a stop for boys, except in the fall of the year when the rabbit hunting season was on. Bagged rabbits would be hung in pairs on a rim of a barrel outside the store. Nearby was a bakery. That was one window we had to stop by for some time. The pastry was a treat for the eyes. Occasionally we would have an extra nickel and we'd treat ourselves to a pastry cone. Sheer bliss. Across the street was the Hammond Post Office. Then we passed Jakie Diamond's open air (in the summer time) produce store. He did quite a business the year round. Across Oakley we came to Humpfer's Market with its large display of fish in the iced cases on the sidewalk. Quite regularly on Fridays it was my job on the way home from school to stop by and pick up some fresh pike for supper. (In our neighborhood we had breakfast, lunch and supper.) Then through Minas' where we might go downstairs to pick up

a few groceries, but not very often. Minas, to us, was a prime stop during the Christmas shopping time. Their display of toys was a source of hours of looking each year.

If my memory serves me correctly when the building that now houses the L. Fish Furniture Co. on the northwest corner of Oakley and State was built, there was quite a furor about the name taken by the new merchant. Built as it was so close to Minas Department Store, and capitalizing on the Minas name, the new store adopted the name of Minas Furniture Co. It seems to me that the store had such a steel sign, about two or three stories high, suspended from the front of the building. I don't recall how this was adjudicated, but some months later the name was changed. Across the street were Millikan's and Colonial's Sport Stores. What attractions for boys. Many is the quarter hour we spent at those display windows. Guns, hunting knives, tents, canoes, shells, binoculars, football gear, baseballs, gloves, bats, basketballs, fishing gear, ice skates. We'd stop in front of the Bijou and in front of the Orpheum to look at the advertising pictures in the display windows that showed scenes from the current movies.

As a Lake County Times newsboy, I'd pick up my papers for my route down Bulletin Avenue, about half way between State and Plummer. If I'm not mistaken, the Times was also printed nearby. And then, if we were fortunate to get across the Erie tracks, we came to the Center of the Universe -- Hammond's Four Corners. People, street cars, trucks, wagons -- what a maelstrom. On the southeast corner there was the Schulte Cigar store. Occasionally I'd go there on errands for my dad to pick up Five Brothers pipe tobacco and Kentucky Twist chewing tobacco. It's my guess that Schulte's was the only store in town that handled these exotic items. Besides the pungent aroma of tobacco in the store, there was the ever present blue gas flame for the convenience of men who just purchased cigars.

On the northeast corner was the Coney Island Restaurant. The area outside this restaurant was chronically jammed with people waiting to catch street cars. And as you waited for the cars on a cold day, the fragrance of broiling frankfurters, with the connotation of warmth and comfort, was almost unbearable. On the northwest corner there was the Walgreen Drug Store. When times were really flush, we'd be treated to a 25¢ malted milkshake at Walgreen's. The shakes were served with a large dollop of whipped cream. As we put our noses into the glass to enjoy

the milkshake we sometimes came up with a daub of whipped cream on our noses. On the southwest corner was a produce store much like Jackie Diamond's. Like Diamond's this produce store had huge display counters on the sidewalk. It was not unusual for stores to display considerable merchandise on sidewalks. Down the block a bit was Weiss Drug Store. As we turned south on Hohman we passed the Hammond Building that housed many professional people such as doctors and lawyers. I recall being vaccinated by Dr. Chevigny in that building. I think dentist, Dr. Smith, was also in that building. Also in the building was a violin maker where I occasionally had to take my tortured violin for repairs. Across the street was the Parthenon. We didn't waste much time looking at the display pictures showing scenes from the current attractions. The Parthenon did not show class films like those of Hoot Gibson and W.S. Hart. About a half block east on Sibley on the north side of the street was the most popular barber shop in town -- Simpson's, and the Monon station. This building was a credit to the town. However, the Erie station just across the tracks looked like a relic from the Civil War.

The men who sold railroad tickets (at the Erie Station) in my brief experience, must have been trained in insolence. They sold tickets as if the passengers were bothering them. They gave information in inadequate and surly language. This applied to South Shore agents as well.

At the southeast corner of Sibley and Hohman was a genuine five and ten cent store. (Presumably an expression that has no meaning to anyone under forty). Ah, Woolworth's. What a paradise for just walking up and down the aisles and seeing hundreds of things priced at five and ten cents. Needles, pins, marbles, caps, thimbles, pencils, tablets, nails, wire, thread, kitchen utensils, knives, forks, dishes, and toys, toys, toys.

How we would walk up and down the aisles. A special kind of enjoyment was walking around the huge candy counter and just looking -- as we seldom had the price of a dime's worth of candy. That did not stop us from enjoying the displays. There must have been hundreds of items displayed on the counters. Display boxes were about 18" wide and 24" front to back. One that sticks in my mind was the display box for "gold" rimmed spectacles. People would come in and stand at the counter and try on pair after pair of these spectacles. When they found the pair that did the best for them, a purchase would be made.

Then on past the DeLuxe Theater and over to the Lion Store that stood on the site of Goldblatt's. The owners of the Lion Store rebuilt the store in the late 1920's just in time to be clobbered by the depression. The owners, Kaufmann and Wolf, had to give up their beautiful store. You can still see the initials K & W on the decorative terrazzo stones on the front of the building. Like Minas, the Lion Store was a great place to visit at Christmas time to ogle the toys in the Toy Department. Then on past the courthouse to look in the windows of the Ruff Hardware store. Perhaps we'd stop to gape at the workers moving Central Hammond High School from the corner of Hohman and Fayette to Russell Street. Or perhaps we'd watch the excavation and construction of what is now the Calumet National Building. Occasionally there would be a medicine show on the present site of Rosalee's. Then there was the huge, garish and red sign "MEE HOTEL" that stood out so blazingly at night.

And then there was the grand night of the week down town -- Saturday night, when the stores stayed open (the only night the stores stayed open). Everyone, so it seemed, went downtown to shop or just to make chance encounters with friends and acquaintances. The wonder of it all. Traffic jams, street car jams. Policeman walking beats. Salvation Army units with their devoted groups of musicians and singers playing Gospel music at the Christian preaching. This they would do in all kinds of weather. Preaching, shopping, meeting friends, street cars, jitneys, autos, trains, stoers, charlatans selling gimmicks on street corners, and people, people, people.

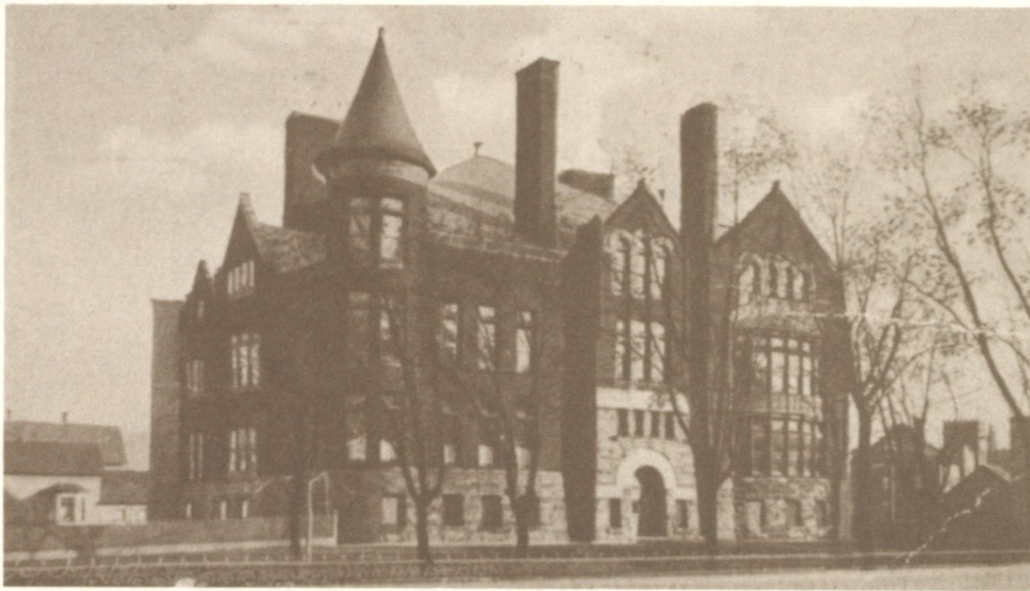
Gone -- all gone.



Orpheum Theatre on East State (1917)



Moving day for Old Central High School



Remodeled High School



Bijou Theatre on State Street
(Early 1900's)



Paramount Theatre



Lion Store, 1900.



Schulte Cigar Store, State & Hohman.



EDWARD B. HAYWARD 1916 - 1983

April 1983
By Marjorie Sohl, Secretary

As members of the Hammond Historical Society, I feel we all need to pause for a moment of tribute at the recent passing of one who served the Society and the city of Hammond for more than twenty-five years, Edward Beardsley Hayward.

I cannot help but express personal feelings because I was closely associated with Mr. Hayward on the job at the Hammond Public Library from the time that he came to Hammond in 1954 until he retired in 1981. We also worked together from the beginning of the Hammond Historical Society in 1960 when John Wilhelm, Warren Reeder and Edward Hayward were the organizers of the Society and I served since then as the Society's secretary.

Through these many years of association, I learned to know and respect the quiet, unassuming way in which Mr. Hayward's organizational abilities contributed to the handling of the myriad details of paper work to get an organization started and incorporated. He served as our third president, following Mr. Wilhelm and Mr. Reeder. He served on innumerable committees for the society, arranging for many speakers at regular programs. He played a prominent role in the planning of the Bicentennial celebration and establishing of the Tri-Centennial Fund. Upon the death of Warren Reeder in 1976 before the Bicentennial history was completed for publication, he assumed the editorship of that publication and saw it to its completion. Today it is one of our best up-to-date sources of Hammond history. Likewise, at that time, he assumed the editorship of the Hammond Historical Society Newsletter which Mr. Reeder had edited from its beginning. It was in the Newsletter that Mr. Hayward's love of and ability for writing really showed and developed.

Before Mr. Hayward's sudden passing on March 10,

plans were already started for the next Hammond Historical Society publication, but now they seem all the more appropriate as a final tribute to him. For many years we have talked about publishing excerpts from the Society's minutes and newsletters. Before Mr. Hayward retired and moved to New Hampshire to live, he had used his editing abilities to go through our records and select what he felt were significant events in the life of the Society and its publications. These he noted down and were kept by your secretary until this year when the efforts of Bert Hindmarch and Roger Reeder will hopefully bring about this, our next publication.

We can all be thankful that this man lived among us for a significant part of his life and that we have had the opportunity to know and work with him.



Edward B. Hayward



IN MEMORIAM -- JOHN F. WILHELM

September 1984
By Roger Reeder

"What a Friend We Have in Jesus"
"What a Friend We Had in John"

These are notes from the memorial service of John F. Wilhelm II service.

When I first heard the news of John's death in Washington, D.C., I began to reflect on some of our past memories together. The first thing I could recall was as a young boy going over to the bank on Friday evenings with my father to make deposits and always being warmly greeted by John who would then offer me a sucker, giving me a choice of any color. Our next encounter as I recall was in 1968 when we had a celebration dinner commemorating the 45th anniversary of the Student Government Association which was founded by John in 1923 and for which he served as the first president.

That following fall, just before the college career was to begin, I was going to school at the University of Richmond in Virginia, John had a long list of names of people of whom he knew in the area and would like for me to call upon and introduce myself.

Being gone from the area for a considerable length of time, I did not get to know John better until right after the premature death of my father in 1976. I remember being up at the hospital and John coming through the cold wintery storm in November to tell us to keep our chins up even though we knew that the revival of my father was hopeless. Upon my father's death, John was the first to come over to our home to wish his condolences.

From this point on, our friendship grew even closer as John began to take me to different events, almost serving as my second father.

John was the first one to teach me how to drink at a Civil War Round Table Meeting up in Chicago. He looked at me and said, "Rog, I want you to go up and buy a Pepsi. Hold it in your hands and then converse with the other fellows. They won't know if you're drinking anything or not, but you will feel more at ease." I followed his advice and it worked.

John F. Wilhelm II was born on Ogden Street in Hammond and later moved to Detroit Street to grow up as a young boy who would play football over in Glendale Park. Active as a Boy Scout, he became a champion knot tier. He continued to carry this title for many years even after his departure from Scouting. He would challenge new young boys to a contest with him in which he would tie the knots behind his back while the young men tied the knots with their arms in front. He was never able to achieve the Eagle Scout award due to a bout with polio at age four which prohibited him from leaping hurdles as required.

Upon his graduation from Hammond High School, he went on to Wabash College for two years before being called back home to assist in a fledgling family business which was beginning to feel the effects of the oncoming depression. After all was lost, John went to work for the Internal Revenue Service, first as a prohibition officer and later as a tax agent. It was at this time that he met his wonderful wife of 49 years, 11 months, Ethel Wilhelm.

After this youthful experience, John took his knowledge and went into the tax and insurance business known as the John F. Wilhelm Agency. As the business grew, John moved from his location on the site of today's J.C. Penney building to 479 State Street. The facilities lent themselves well to the currency exchange, having been a former bank. John started the currency exchange and later in 1944 that same site became the first office of the Hoosier State Bank, founded by John Wilhelm, for which he served as first president.

John was a motivator and idea man. He would go to his friends, tell them of his ideas, and encourage them to invest. He was always concerned first with providing a service to the people, and if it made some money, all the better.

John was instrumental in the Wil-Reed Co., a partnership with Warren A. Reeder, Jr., his close friend,

which provided real estate services out of the bank and which partnership still exists today. He founded the National Service Corporation which created a cemetery at Route 30 and Burr Street for the people of South lake County in 1954.

In 1964, the Arthur Franklin Corporation was founded for purposes of purchasing the Oak Hill Cemetery, Hammond's first cemetery and burial grounds for many of Hammond's original founders. In part, the purchase was done out of frustration of dealing with the existing caretaker who was not cooperative in permitting John and my father to get into the cemetery records to trace family histories.

Another investment company, known as Reiso Corporation (John once told me that that's Hoosier" spelled backwards) was formed in 1968 to create an investment vehicle for Hammond business men.

But John's real love was not in his business, but rather in community service which was culminated in 1975 by his being honored by the Hammond Exchange Club with their Golden Deeds award. John was recognized in the founding of the Hammond Historical Society, the Northwest Indiana Art Association, and the Northwest Indiana Community Concert Association, of which he served as first president of two organizations. His encouragement prompted the writing and publication of over 12 books by the Hammond Historical Society as well as a record entitled "This Is Hammond," made in 1964 celebrating the sesquicentennial of the state of Indiana.

His community activity did not stop in his beloved Hammond, but went on state wide with his 20 years of service on the Indiana Historical Society where he represented the Calumet Region and served as Chairman of the Board. He encouraged Eli Lilly to remember the Indiana Historical Society in his will and Mr. Lilly paid heed. Upon his death, he left the Indiana Historical Society an endowment of \$14.5 million.

Additional services were given by John to the Hammond Kiwanis Club as well as serving as a board member of the Hammond Public Library . In 1976, actively serving on the Hammond Bicentennial and Tri-Centennial committees with John Bowby, John encouraged each grade school student of Hammond to donate a nickel and penny to be invested until the year 2076 at which time over a half million dollars will be

available for scholarships to worthy students of Hammond.

Through all the aforementioned, John did not neglect by any means his spiritual life. In fact, it was the guiding light which gave this man of great faith in Jesus Christ, the power and inspiration to leave this world a better place than that which he found.

Although we will all miss the physical presence of John's warm smile and hello, we will all continue to feel and be inspired by the heritage which our dear friend, John, has left.



John F. Wilhelm



IN MEMORIAM -- Bert A. Hindmarch 1913 - 1989

By Robert O. Kindle

"I knew Bert Hindmarch" is a phrase often repeated by his many friends, students, fellow workers and acquaintances of different ethnic backgrounds and races. He was truly of the people and for the people as a husband, parent, teacher, counselor and philosopher.

He was one to lead and direct, but he also did that which needed to be done to make an organization successful or to motivate a person in his personal and professional life. His teachings, lectures and counseling directed many students on to success in their professional life.

Bert was born October 20, 1913, in Fort Wayne, Indiana. His parents migrated to East Chicago, Indiana, where he graduated from East Chicago Roosevelt High School in 1931.

Bert received a degree in accounting from Northwestern University and his MBA degree in Labor and Personnel Relations from the University of Chicago.

His professional career started at the American Steel Foundry where he became the Assistant Director of Public Relations prior to retirement in 1969. During his 27 years with Amsted, he started lecturing part time at Purdue Calumet in 1974. Upon his retirement, he became an assistant professor of Supervision at Purdue Calumet.

Bert was elevated to an Associate Professor in 1973 and a full Professor in 1977. His full time teaching career was concluded upon his retirement from Purdue Calumet in 1979 as a Professor Emeritus of Supervision.

As a retiree Bert started teaching part time at both Purdue Calumet and Calumet College. The teaching was done at the graduate and undergraduate levels with great success.

Bert served many organizations in an active roll. Community and civic organizations he served included the Hammond Historical Society, the Hammond Historical Preservation Commission, the Service Corps of Retired Executives, the Hammond Chamber of Commerce and the Historical Pullman District Restoration Society. He was awarded the Hammond Chamber of Commerce Outstanding Business

Award for 1989.

He was the recipient of the first honorary life membership of the American Society of Professional Supervision upon his retirement in 1979. Bert served as its first Executive Secretary while at Purdue Calumet. The Purdue Calumet Alumni Distinguished Service Award was conferred on Bert in 1980.

Being an avid tennis player, he was a member of the Hammond Tennis Club. As a community minded person, he was active in the Woodmar Homeowners Association for Community Involvement.

Bert was a compassionate husband and parent to his wife Margery, his daughter Kathryn and son Terry. He was the proud grandparent of three grandchildren, twins Robert and Terry Schwingendorf and Michelle Hindmarch.

Bert passed away July 13, 1989, leaving an active life which is a challenge to all of us. We can be a living memorial to Bert by carrying on in our professional life and serving our community to the best of our ability.

As Charles Tinkham, a fellow Purdue Professor, expressed in his poem dedicated to Bert, "You were a philosopher of time and now you've come to know the long gold turns and the mansions of eternity."



Bert A. Hindmarch

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THE HAMMOND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

564 State Street
Hammond, Indiana 46320

"When we were young, we did not ask questions, and when we were old, there was no one to answer questions."

Founded in 1960, the Hammond Historical Society has as its purpose, "to publish, and to promote and to preserve historical knowledge and to spread historical information with reference to the City of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Through the medium of regular meetings, an annual banquet, historical tours and newsletters, we meet to exchange ideas and to enjoy the fellowship of like minded local historians, both in Hammond and the Calumet Region.

Through the Calumet Room in the Hammond Public Library, we have met one of our goals--"to collect and preserve the materials of history, area and industry." This is open for earnest and casual seekers of information as to Hammond history.

The publications we have available for distribution include:

- 1) The 1891-92 Hammond City Directory
- 2) The Hammond City Directory of 1889-90
- 3) The History of the Hammond Fire Department
- 4) The Hammond Braves
- 5) The Red Crown Gasoline

YOUR PART

Your interest in our program for promoting and preserving our historical heritage is welcomed.

Our nominal annual dues are \$5.00 for individuals and \$10.00 for institutions. We also have a Life Membership for \$100.00. You may become a member by sending a check made payable to the Hammond Historical Society to the Hammond Public Library at 564 State Street, Hammond, IN 46320.

Our new members are presented with a copy of Hammond, Indiana's American Bicentennial Yearbook.

INDEX

- Alice Club; 115
- American Brick; 119
- American Bridge Co.; 21
- Anderson, Vernon; 69-71, il. 71
- Angelo's Restaurant; 91
- Arkin, Leo; 28, 43
- Arnold, Fern; 97-98
- Artim, Ralph; 21
- Artim Trucking; 21, il. 22
- Austgen, Peter; 85
- Bailey Homestead; 87
- Baer, Clifford; 91
- Ball, Timothy H.; 60
- Becker, Inez; 61
- Becker, Lawrence; 62
- Beckman, Fred; 28, 43
- Beckman, John; 107, 109
- Bell, K. H.; 60
- Bell, Walter; 28
- Bell Telephone Bldg.; 11
- Bellman, William C.; 110, 113-6, il. 112, 116
- Betz, Alice; 17
- Betz, Frank S.; 13, il. 14, 15-9, 20, 35
- Betz home; il. 18
- Bicknell, Henry; 62
- Bijou Theatre; 123, 146, il. 161
- Bomberger, L. L.; 108
- Bowers, Mrs. Vincent; 27
- Bowlby, John; 137
- Boy Scouts; 103-4, il. 102, 104, 114, 148-9, 166
- Bradley, Preston; 133
- Brehm, John J. & Son Fuel Co.; 59
- Bruno, James T.; 14
- Brusel, Jacob; 43
- Burns Funeral Home; 156
- Buster, Jerry; 110
- Caldwell, George W.; 73-4
- Caldwell, Lee L.; 27-8
- Calumet Avenue; 29
- Calumet Beverages; 91
- Calumet National Bank; 11, 120, il. 121
- Cantwell, Guy; 27
- Central Park; 153
- Central School; 27-8, il. 160
- Chicago Telephone Co.; 61, 63
- Ciesar, John; 78
- Clark, Mrs. Marion; 30
- Columbus, Indiana; 73-4
- Community Liquors; 91
- Conkey, Henry; 16, 19, 34
- Conkey, W. B.; 13, 19, 33-5, 35, 36, 128
- Conkey, W. B., Co.; 33-5, 35, 36, 128
- Coolidge, Calvin, President; 13
- Court House; il. 64, 73-5
- Cravens, Nina; 27
- Cross, Irvin; 117-8, il. 118
- Crumpacker, Owen; 110
- Decotah Indiana; 87
- Dedelow, Duane; 110
- Delaney, Charles; 45-6
- DeLuxe Theatre; 146
- Dietrich's Sweet Shop; 25, 53
- Dillner's Saloon; 25, 53
- Doolin, Richard; 110
- Drackert home; 11
- Drake, Lester; 74
- Dubbs, Chris; 33
- Dunes Highway; 87
- Elmwood Cemetery; 116
- Ennis, Sam; 110
- Episcopal Church; 62
- Ewing, Ruth; 117-8
- First Methodist Church; 114
- First National Bank; 114
- First Trust and Savings Bank; 114
- Fitzgerald, John; 13
- Foley, John; 43
- Forsythe, Mr.; 78
- Fox, Jack; 11
- Fox Indians; 87
- Gault, Wesley; 91
- Gibson Station; 66
- Gilberts, Robert; 110
- Gillis, Robert; 61, 111
- Glendale Park; 29, 105-11, il. 111
- Goldblatt Department Store; 128
- Gostlin, Mr.; 26, 108
- Grand Calumet River; 47-8, il. 48, 59, 65, 127, 129
- Great Books; 138
- Green Lake; 120
- Green Line (Street car); 123, 150, il. 151
- Griswold Hardware Store; 156
- Groman, H. C.; 62
- Halas, George; 125
- Hammond, George H.; 60
- Hammond George H., Packing Co.; 59, il. 130
- Hammond Building Loan and Savings Assn.; 114
- Hammond Centennial, 1951; 70
- Hammond High School; 28
- Hammond Historical Society; 12, 163-4, 167
- Hammond Plan Commission; 70
- Hammond Public Library; 45, il. 99, 131-40, 140, 167
- Hammond Technical High School; 27-8
- Handley, Harold, Governor; 71

Hanish Store, 1920; il. 151
 Hannauer, George; 13
 Harbison-Walker Refractories; 69
 Harjes, Herman; 15
 Harrison Park; 26, il. 26, 48,
 129, il. 129, 153
 Hartington, Wilson; 43
 Hays, John; 78
 Hayward, Edward B.; 131-40,
 163-4, il. 164
 Hayward, Edward B., home; 93-5,
 il. 95
 Hess, Joe; 23
 Hessville; 66
 Hesterman, Marie; 127-9
 Hickman, Charles; 43
 Hindmarch, Bert; 169-71, il. 171
 Hirsch, Joe; 53-54, il. 54
 Hobbs, Wilfred, 43
 Hohman, Carolyn; 11
 Hohman, Ernst; 25
 Hoosier Bank Building; 11
 Horseshoe Bar; 90
 Howard, James, 98
 Hudson, Clyde; 43
 Huehn Opera House; 11
 Humpfer, Fred; 63
 Humpfer, Joseph; 62
 Ice houses; 77-79, il. 80, 147
 Indian burying ground; 59-60
 Indian Trails; map 86
 Indiana Avenue; 25
 Indiana Historical Society; 167
 Indiana Toll Road; 70
 Industrial Road; 59
 Israel; 19
 Jarnecke, Mr.; 51
 Jennings, Bob; 62
 Jewett, Harry; 15
 Jitney; 150
 Johnson's Grocery; 123
 Jones, Dr. E. S.; 29
 Jones, Winn; 43
 Kasson, Charles; 60
 Kaufman, Carl; 63
 Keeler Branch Library; 97, 137
 Kenwood Street; 54
 Kindle Robert O.; 169-70
 Knickerbocker Ice Co.; 77, il. 80
 Knights of Pythias; 115
 Knotts, Thomas E.; 46
 Krieger, Charles, 43
 Krieger, Herman; 43
 Krimbill, Oscar; 61-3
 Ku Klux Klan; 155
 Kuhn, Hedwig; 109
 Kutak, Jerome F.; 105-11
 LaHayne Funeral Home; il. 18
 Lake County Savings and
 Trust Co.; 114

Lake County Trust &
 Savings Bank; 16, 114
 Landon, Marie; 28
 Leisenfelt, Ed; 90
 Lever Brothers; 125
 Liberty Hall; 55-58, il. 58, 89
 Lincoln School; 27
 Lion Store; 62, 158, il. 162
 McClay, John; 55, 89
 McClay, Ralph; 89-91
 McFarland, Charles; 43
 Mack, Grace; 65
 Mack, Peter; 65
 Mack Verlyn; 65
 Magdanz, Herman; 127
 Mann, Crayton; 30
 Marathon dancing; 90
 Marcus, Alice Hess; 28
 Martin, Frank; 69-70
 Martinson, Tom; 70
 Masonic Lodge; 114
 Mattwig, Ellen; 66-8
 Maynard Brick yard; il. 122
 Maywood Park; 152
 Maywood School; 117
 Mazur, Jerry; 109
 Menominee Indians; 87
 Meyn, Peter W.; 13-4, il. 14,
 16, 108, 114
 Miller, Arthur; 43
 Milligan home; 11
 Milliken Store; 53
 Minas, Edward C.; 23
 Minas, Edward C. III; 23
 Minas, Edward C., Co.; 23-4,
 il. 24, 156
 Minas, Emil; 23
 Minas Furniture Co.; 157
 Minas home; 11, 63
 Mitchell, Dean; 109
 Monon Railroad; 85
 Mueller Hardware Store; 11
 National Brick Co.; 119
 Neidow Funeral Home; 62, il. 64
 Newman, George; 33
 Newman, Harry; 43
 Nichols, Albert; 97
 Nixon, Richard; 71
 Oak Hill Cemetery; 11, 167
 O'Hern, Maurice; 141-59
 Opp, Winnie; 97
 Oriole Cycle Co.; 47
 Orpheum Theatre; 146, il. 159
 Ottenheimer, Lester; 47-8
 Paramount Theatre; 125, il. 161
 Parthenon Theatre; 147, 158
 Paxton, W. G.; 29
 Phillips, John; 103-4
 Phrommer, John; 43
 Pinkerton, Kirk; 110

Powley, Wesley; 120
 Purdue University Calumet; 169
 Queen Ann Candy Co.; 14-5
 Rand-McNally Co.; 33-4
 Reed, F. Derril; 55-6, 83-4
 Reed, J. Wesley; 55
 Reeder, Roger; 165-8
 Reeder, Warren A.; 11, 81-4,
 il. 82, 106, 140
 Rhind, Alex; 28
 Rimbach, Joseph; 26, 62, 128
 Rimbach Avenue; 61-3
 Riverside School; 11
 Roby Annexation; 78
 Rowe, Josephine Krinbill; 61
 Sachs, Julius; 107, 109
 St. Margaret Hospital; 29-31,
 il. 31, 32, 48
 Saxony; 65
 Scherer, John; 25-6
 Schloer Shoe Store; 11, 128
 Schmidt, Max; 51
 Schmueser, Henry; 51, il. 52
 Schreiber, Walt; 51
 Schulte Cigar Store; 157, il. 162
 Seeley, Ray; 14
 Seifer's Furniture Store; 156
 Shedd, Mr.; 78
 Sheffield; 78
 Shepherd, Jean; 37-40, il. 39
 Sheridan, Lawrence V.; 70
 Simplex fire; 48
 Sister Adelberta; 30
 Sister Delphina; 30
 Sister Huberta; 30
 Sister Mary Joseph; 87-8
 Smidt, Pete; 77-8
 Smidt, Phil; 77-8, il. 76
 Smith, Bert; 70
 Smith, Jerry; 109
 Sobieski; 65
 Sohl, Marjorie; 9-11, 163-4
 South Shore Railroad; 150
 Stack, Thomas; 14
 Standard Steel Car Co.; 13, 29, 141
 State Street; 45-6, 53
 State Theatre; 132, 147
 Stewart, Kenneth; 43
 Street car, see Green Line
 Summer Street; 29
 Summers, Walter; 119-20
 Svoboda Museum; 101-2
 Sweitzer Grocery; 155
 Swibes, Donald; 110
 Tapper Building; 11
 Taylor, David; 49
 Taylor, Edward Winthrop; 49-50
 Taylor Chain Co.; 49-50, il. 50
 Terre, Mr.; 25
 Thornton, Walter; 69
 Thorpe, Jim; 125
 Tittle Meat Market; 156
 Towle, M. M.; 60, 114
 Towle Opera House; 114
 Towle, Porter B.; 60
 Turner, A. Murray; 13, il. 14,
 29, 41-3, 61, 108, 114
 Turner Field; 125, 154
 Twomey, Jerry; 109
 VanBokkelen, Joe; 109
 Vogel, Bob; 124
 Voorheis, Gardner; 43
 Walz Bicycle Shop; 156
 Wamsher, John; 9
 Warne, Glen; 43
 Watts, Captain; 66
 Weiss, Arthur; 13-4, 16, 19
 West Hammond; 65
 Wicker Memorial Park; 13
 Wiedeman, Fred; 63
 Wiese, Earl; 34
 Wilhelm, John; 9, 12, 28, 240,
 165-8, il. 168
 Wilke, William; 110, il. 112
 Winslow, A. A.; 60
 Winnebago Indians; 87
 Wolf, Leo; 63
 Wolf Lake; 29, 77
 Wolters, Arthur; 43
 Wolters, Charley; 15, 17-8
 Woolworth's; 158
 World War I; 41-3, il. 44, 50, 55-7
 World War I; 50, 65
 Young, A. A.; 125
 Zlotnik, Maurey; 123-5

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